

# **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)**

**For 2019-2020 AmeriCorps\*State Funds**



**RFP #1920WNCSB-AC**

**Issued by:  
STATE OF WISCONSIN  
WISCONSIN NATIONAL AND COMMUNITY SERVICE BOARD**

**Submitting a Notification of Intent to Apply is mandatory for all applicants. Access the survey at:**

**<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/19-20RFP>**

**Notifications of Intent to Apply must be submitted by 12:00 Midnight CT,  
October 25, 2018**

**All Proposals and Required Additional Documents must be  
received no later than 4:30 PM CT on November 5, 2018**

**LATE NOTIFICATIONS OF INTENT TO APPLY AND PROPOSALS WILL NOT  
BE ACCEPTED**

**For further information regarding this RFP, contact  
[servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov)**

**Questions on this RFP will be accepted until 12:00 Midnight, November 1, 2018**

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Appendix A: 2019-2020 AmeriCorps\*State Application Peer Review Form

Appendix B: Formula Funding Process—Narrative

Appendix C: Selection Criteria for 2019-2020 Formula Grant Competition – Performance Scoring Examples

### Important Dates

- **Notification of Intent to Apply:** Submission of a Notification of Intent to Apply is required to be eligible for this competition and is due **October 25, 2018 by 12:00 Midnight CT** via the following online form:  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/19-20RFP>.
- **Deadline:** Proposals and required additional documents must be received by Serve Wisconsin by **November 5, 2018 at 4:30 PM CT. Late proposals and documents will not be accepted.**
- **Notification of Selection:** Successful applicants will be notified by **Monday, April 1, 2019**

## 1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

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This *Request for Proposals (RFP)* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations 45 CFR Sections 2520 – 2550, which can be found at [http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR\\_chapterXXV.pdf](http://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/45CFR_chapterXXV.pdf), the *RFP Glossary* (section 8.0), *Application Instructions and Attachments*, and *Performance Measure Instructions*, which are incorporated by reference. The full regulations are available online at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov). TTY number is 800-833-3722.

Creation of the RFP is an activity that is aligned with the Wisconsin State Service Plan, which can be found at <https://serve.wisconsin.wi.gov/Pages/AboutUs/StateServicePlan.aspx>. The RFP is issued by Serve Wisconsin and the State of Wisconsin, and publication of this *RFP* does not obligate Serve Wisconsin or the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to award any specific number of grants or to obligate the entire amount of funding available.

## 1.1 Program Description

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The mission of CNCS is to improve lives, strengthen communities, and foster civic participation through service and volunteering. Through AmeriCorps, Senior Corps, and the Volunteer Generation Fund, CNCS has helped to engage millions of citizens in meeting community and national challenges through service and volunteer action.

### 1.1.1 Purpose of AmeriCorps Funding

AmeriCorps grants are awarded to eligible organizations (see section 1.3) proposing to engage AmeriCorps members in evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions/practices to strengthen communities. An AmeriCorps member is an individual who engages in community service through an approved national service position. Members may receive a living allowance and other benefits while serving. Upon successful completion of their service, members earn a Segal AmeriCorps Education Award from the National Service Trust that members can use to pay for higher education expenses or apply to qualified student loans.

### 1.1.2 CNCS Focus Areas

The National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended by the Serve America Act, emphasizes measuring the impact of service and focusing on a core set of issue areas. In order to carry out Congress' intent and to maximize the impact of investment in national service, CNCS has the following focus areas:

#### **Disaster Services**

Grant activities will provide support to increase the preparedness of individuals for disasters, improve individuals' readiness to respond to disasters, help individuals recover from disasters, and/or help individuals mitigate disasters.

#### **Economic Opportunity**

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to the improved economic well-being and security of economically disadvantaged people; help economically disadvantaged people to have improved access to services that enhance financial literacy; transition into or remain in safe, healthy, affordable housing; and/or have improved employability leading to increased success in becoming employed.

#### **Education**

Grants will provide support and/or facilitate access to services and resources that contribute to improved educational outcomes for economically disadvantaged children; improved school readiness for economically disadvantaged young children; improved educational and behavioral outcomes of students in low-achieving elementary, middle, and high schools; and/or support economically disadvantaged students' preparation for success in post-secondary educational institutions.

#### **Environmental Stewardship**

Grants will support responsible stewardship of the environment, while preparing communities for challenging circumstances and helping Americans respond to and recover from disruptive life events: programs that conserve natural habitats; protect clean air and water; maintain public lands; support wildland fire mitigation; cultivate individual and community self-sufficiency; and provide reforestation services after floods or fires.

## **Healthy Futures**

Grants will provide support for activities that will address the opioid crisis; increase seniors' ability to remain in their own homes with the same or improved quality of life for as long as possible; and/or increase physical activity and improve nutrition with the purpose of reducing obesity.

## **Veterans and Military Families**

Grants will positively impact the quality of life of veterans and improve military family strength; increase the number of veterans, wounded warriors, military service members, and their families served by CNCS programs; and/or increase the number of veterans and military family members engaged in service through CNCS programs.

### **1.1.3 AmeriCorps Funding Priorities (See section 8.0 for further information about some of the priorities and additional requirements)**

CNCS seeks to prioritize the investment of national service resources in:

- Economic Opportunity - increasing economic opportunities for communities by engaging opportunity youth to prepare them for the workforce.
- Education - selection of one of the evidence-based interventions in three categories: School Readiness (three evidence-based interventions), K-12 success (nine evidence-based interventions), and Post-Secondary Support (one evidence-based intervention). In order to qualify for this priority, the applicants must be assessed as having Moderate or Strong evidence by the reviewers.
- Healthy Futures - reducing and/or preventing prescription drug and opioid abuse.
- Veterans and Military Families - positively impacting the quality of life of veterans and improving military family strength.
- Rural intermediaries - organizations that demonstrate measureable impact and primarily serve rural communities with limited resources and organizational infrastructure.
- Safer Communities - programs that focus on public safety, and/or partnerships between law enforcement and the community.
- Faith-based organizations.

In order to receive priority consideration and the points awarded for submitting an application within an AmeriCorps Funding priority(ies), applicants must demonstrate that the priority area is a significant part of the program focus and intended outcomes and must include a high quality program design. Responses that propose programs for the purpose of receiving priority consideration are not guaranteed funding.

### **1.1.4 Performance Measures**

All applications must include at least one aligned performance measure (output and outcome) that corresponds to the proposed primary intervention. This may be a National Performance Measure or an applicant-determined measure. Additional performance measures, including output-only National Performance Measures, may also be included if desired; however, all performance measures must be consistent with the program's Theory of Change and represent significant program activities. CNCS does not expect applicants to select performance measures to correspond to each and every potential member activity or community impact. CNCS values the quality of performance measures over the quantity of performance measures.

CNCS expects applicants to use National Performance Measures as part of their comprehensive performance measurement strategy if the National Performance Measures are part of the applicant's theory of change. Applicants should use both performance and evaluation data to learn from their work as well as make tactical and strategic adjustments to achieve their goals. For more information, please refer to the *Performance Measure Instructions* at

[https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2019%20Performance%20Measures%20Instructions\\_Clean\\_FINAL\\_508ed.pdf](https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/2019%20Performance%20Measures%20Instructions_Clean_FINAL_508ed.pdf).

### **1.1.5 Program Authority**

CNCS's legal authority to award these grants is found in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended, (NCSA) (42 U.S.C. 12501 et seq.).

## 1.2 Federal Award Information

### 1.2.1 Estimated Available Funds

CNCS expects a highly competitive AmeriCorps grant competition. CNCS reserves the right to prioritize providing funding to existing awards over making new awards. The actual level of funding will be subject to the availability of annual appropriations.

### 1.2.2 Estimated Award Amount

Grant awards have two components: operating funds and AmeriCorps member positions. Grant award amounts vary – both in the level of operating funds and in the type and amount of AmeriCorps member positions – as determined by the scope of the projects.

### 1.2.3 Project/Award Period

The project period is generally one year with a start date of August 15 or September 1, 2019, and end date of August 14 or August 31, 2020, respectively. Continuation funding for subsequent years is not guaranteed and shall be dependent on availability of appropriations and satisfactory performance.

The project start date may not occur prior to the date CNCS awards the grant. AmeriCorps members may not enroll prior to the start date of the award. AmeriCorps members may not begin service prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period as designated in the grant award. A program may not certify any hours a member performs prior to the beginning of the member enrollment period.

### 1.2.4 Type of Award

AmeriCorps Operating Grants: CNCS may award a Cost Reimbursement or a Fixed Amount grant to any successful applicant, but the availability of a Full-Time Fixed Amount grant is limited to certain applicants. Professional Corps are not eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement grants. See sections 1.3.1 and 8.0 for more information. CNCS will not provide both types of grants for the same project in one fiscal year.

Grant Types	Cost Reimbursement	Fixed Amount			
Available Subtypes	Traditional	Full-time	Education Award Program (EAP)	Professional Corps	No Cost Slots
Maximum Cost per MSY	\$15,192	\$15,192	\$800	\$1,000*	\$0
Type of Slots in the National Service Trust	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time or Less than Full-time serving in a full-time capacity	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time	Full-time only	Full-time, Three Quarter-time, Half-time, Reduced half-time, Quarter-time, Minimum Time
Budget Submission Required	Yes	No		Yes, if requesting operating funds	No
Availability of Funds linked to enrollment and retention of awarded MSYs	No	Yes			No

Special Requirements	N/A	N/A	Must place qualified professionals in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Member salaries and benefits must be paid entirely by organization where member serves and not included in budget.	N/A
Financial Reporting Requirements	Yes	No		
Available to new Applicants	Yes	No	Yes	

*\* CNCS requires Professional Corps programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-CNCS sources. CNCS will only consider operating funds of up to \$1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate significant organizational financial need based on the materials reviewed by the Office of Grant Management.*

*CNCS reserves the right to determine whether an applicant is a Professional Corps and whether the legal applicant has sufficiently demonstrated that they cannot effectively operate an AmeriCorps program without receiving CNCS operating funds. Given the high demand for AmeriCorps funding there may be specific circumstances where CNCS determines that either a legal applicant is not a Professional Corps program or is unlikely to demonstrate a need for operational funds due to other funding resources. Where CNCS's due diligence review of a Professional Corps application shows that the applicant has a historically high level of support from non-CNCS sources, and as a result has levels of unrestricted funding that is in excess of the requested level of CNCS funding, CNCS may choose to not provide additional operational funding.*

### **1.2.5 Program Models**

In Wisconsin, AmeriCorps programs typically employ one of two program models, as described below:

1. Youth Corps Program Model: Pursuant to Sec. 16.22(1)(dm), Wis. Stats., the term "youth corps program" means a full-time, year-round national service program or a full-time, summer national service program that does all of the following: 1) undertakes meaningful service projects with visible public benefit, including natural resources, urban renovation and human resource projects; 2) includes as participants persons who have attained the age of 16 but who have not attained the age of 26, including youths who are not enrolled in school and other disadvantaged youths; and 3) provides those participants with crew-based, highly structured and adult-supervised work experience, life skills training, education, career guidance and counseling, employment training and support services and with the opportunity to develop citizenship values and skills through service to their community and country. (Note: The Wisconsin National Community Service Board (Board; see section 8.0) cautions programs wishing to enroll 16-year-olds in AmeriCorps. CNCS has determined that 16-year-olds must be out-of-school as determined by State Law, and in Wisconsin there are very few cases where a 16-year-old can be deemed out-of-school.)

2. Multi-site Program Model: A "multi-site program" is an AmeriCorps program that places one or two members at multiple project sponsor sites within a single community, county, region or statewide. Host service sites are schools, nonprofit and public agencies that agree to involve an AmeriCorps member in community service; supervise and evaluate that member; and possibly provide a certain amount of matching funds for the member's living allowance and operating costs.



## 1.3 Eligibility Information

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### 1.3.1 Eligible Applicants

The following Non-Federal entities (as defined in 2 CFR. §200.69) who have a DUNS number and are registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) are eligible to apply:

- Indian Tribes (2 CFR. §200.54)
- Institutions of higher education (§200.54)
- Local governments (§200.64)
- Nonprofit organizations (§200.70)
- States (§200.90)

### New Applicants

CNCS encourages organizations that have not received prior funding from CNCS to apply. The general practice is to award no more than 50 member positions (slots) to organizations receiving an AmeriCorps grant for the first time.

New applicants are eligible to apply for Cost Reimbursement and Education Award Program (EAP) grants but are not eligible to apply for Full-Time Fixed Amount grants. Existing subgrantees/operating sites of Fixed Amount and Cost Reimbursement grantees that can demonstrate a successful history and current capacity to manage a Fixed Amount grant are considered to have AmeriCorps experience and therefore can apply for Fixed Amount grants. See section 8.0 for more information about these terms.

### Recompete Applicants

Recompete applicants are organizations that have received AmeriCorps funding before, and are either currently funded through State Formula funding or are currently in their third year of a three-year competitive grant.

### Continuation Applicants

Continuation applicants are organizations that are currently in year one or two of a three-year competitive grant. The following programs are eligible to apply for competitive Continuation funding: Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee-EARN; Dane County Human Services-PASS; Easter Seals Wisconsin; Marshfield Clinic AmeriCorps Afterschool; Marshfield Clinic AmeriCorps Recovery Corps; Milwaukee Christian Center; Renewal Unlimited; United Way of Dane County-Achievement Connections; UW Eau Claire – ECLIPSE; and Wisconsin Association for Homeless and Runaway Services.

Continuation applicants must submit an application in order to be eligible to receive funding for the following year. Please see the *Application Instructions and Attachments* for these requirements. Requests by existing Continuation Applicants for increases in the level of funding or number of positions will be assessed using the criteria under this RFP.

### 1.3.2 Types of Applicants

#### Single-State Applicants

Organizations that propose to operate in only one state must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions (i.e., the Board/Serve Wisconsin). Each commission administers its own selection process and submits to CNCS the applications it selects to compete for funding. The list of State and Territory Commissions can be found here: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/contact-us/state-service-commissions>. A Single-State application submitted directly to CNCS by the applicant rather than the State Commission will be considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

#### National Direct Applicants

National Direct applicants include:

- *Multi-State*: Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one State or Territory apply directly to CNCS.
- *Federally-recognized Indian Tribes*: Applicants that are Indian Tribes may apply directly to CNCS.

Although National Direct applicants do not have to apply to State Service Commissions, there are substantial requirements to coordinate with the Commissions for states in which national service programs will operate. See the CNCS NOFO for more information about these requirements. National Direct applicants must also

complete a National Direct Consultation Form, which is located at <https://www.statecommissions.org/national-direct-consultation>.

In addition to being eligible to apply under this *RFP* or directly to CNCS, federally recognized Indian Tribes will also be eligible to apply for operating or planning grants under a separate Notice of Funding Opportunity for Indian Tribes to be released by CNCS later in winter with an application deadline in spring. CNCS may request applicants apply under the Tribal competition rather than under this *RFP*.

### **1.3.3 Threshold Issues**

Applications should reflect that they meet the following threshold requirements for the grant type for which they are applying.

- If an applicant is applying for a Professional Corps grant, its application must demonstrate that the community in which it will place AmeriCorps members serving as professionals has an inadequate number of said professionals.
- If an applicant is applying for a Full-Time Fixed Amount grant, the application must have full-time members or less than full-time members serving in a full-time capacity (either 1,700 hour members or 300, 450, 675, 900, or 1,200 hour members serving in a full-time capacity.)
- If the proposed service activities require specialized member qualifications and/or training (for example, tutoring programs: 45 CFR. §2522.910-940), the applicant must describe how the program will meet these requirements.

Due to staff time and other capacity commitments for oversight and management of an AmeriCorps program, the Board encourages applicants to apply for no fewer than 10 AmeriCorps members under this *RFP*.

### **1.3.4 Other Requirements**

Under section 132A(b) of the NCSA, organizations that have been convicted of a federal crime may not receive assistance described in this *RFP*.

Note that under section 745 of Title VII, Division E of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2016, if CNCS is aware that any corporation has any unpaid Federal tax liability which—

- has been assessed
- for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and
- that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, that corporation is not eligible for an award under this *RFP*. However, this exclusion will not apply to a corporation which a Federal agency has considered for suspension or debarment and has made a determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the federal government.

Pursuant to the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995, an organization described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(4) that engages in lobbying activities is not eligible to apply for CNCS funding.

CNCS has refocused many national service efforts to assist with the response to natural disasters. Applicants are encouraged to include member service activities in their proposal that would involve members in disaster preparedness or response. This could include member training activities that would involve members in local disaster response or limited deployments to areas in the nation affected by disasters.

Serve Wisconsin supports programs that actively engage qualified people with disabilities as AmeriCorps members and volunteers. These efforts are part of a larger initiative from CNCS, which supports efforts to increase participation in national service by people with disabilities. Serve Wisconsin stands behind the principle that everyone can serve their community and encourages programs to engage people with disabilities in their local service efforts.

## **1.4 Cost Sharing or Matching**

### **1.4.1 Fixed Amount Grants**

There is no match requirement for Fixed Amount grants (see section 8.0), but CNCS does not provide all the funds necessary to operate the program; therefore, organizations should raise the additional revenue required to operate the program.

### 1.4.2 Cost Reimbursement Grants

A first-time successful applicant is required to match at 24 percent for the first three-year funding period. Starting with year four, the match requirement gradually increases every year to 50 percent by year ten, according to the minimum overall share chart found below and in 45 CFR. §2521.60 and below.

AmeriCorps Funding Year	Years 1-3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10
Grantee Share Requirements	24%	26%	30%	34%	38%	42%	46%	50%

#### How to Calculate Minimum Match Requirement

$$\begin{aligned} \$ \text{CNCS (Federal) Request} \div (100\% - \text{minimum match share}\%) &= \$ \text{TOTAL AWARD} \\ \$ \text{TOTAL AWARD} - \$ \text{CNCS Request} &= \$ \text{Grantee Share} \end{aligned}$$

*Example:* A program in year 7 (minimum match share = 38%) of AmeriCorps operations is requesting \$300,000 from CNCS.

$$\begin{aligned} \$300,000 \div (100\% - 38\% \text{ (or } 62\%)) &= \textbf{\$483,871} \text{ (minimum total award)} \\ \$483,871 - \$300,000 &= \textbf{\$183,871} \text{ (minimum grantee share)} \end{aligned}$$

Section 121(e)(5) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12571(e)), requires programs that use other federal funds as match for an AmeriCorps grant to report the amount and source of these funds to CNCS on a Federal Financial Report. Grantees must track and be prepared to report on that match separately each year and at closeout.

The living allowance or salary provided to AmeriCorps members in Professional Corps programs (see section 8.0) does not count toward the matching requirement.

### 1.4.3 Alternative Match

Under certain, very exceptional circumstances, applicants may qualify to meet alternative matching requirements that increase over the years to 35 percent instead of 50 percent as specified in the regulations at 45 CFR. §2521.60(b). To qualify, applicants must demonstrate that the proposed program is either located in a rural county or in a severely economically distressed community as defined in the *Application Instructions and Attachments*. Applicants who plan to request an alternative match schedule must submit a request directly to [servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov) by the application due date of **November 5, 2018 at 4:30 PM Central Time (CT)**. Serve Wisconsin must first approve an alternative match schedule before submitting to CNCS on behalf of state applicants. See the *Application Instructions and Attachments* for more information.

### 1.4.4 Indirect Costs

Application budgets may include indirect costs. Based on qualifying factors, applicants have the option of using a federally approved indirect cost rate, a 5/10 percent fixed option, a 10% *de minimis* rate of modified total direct costs, or may claim certain costs directly as outlined in 2 CFR. §200.413. States, local governments, and Indian Tribes may use approved cost allocation plans. All methods must be applied consistently across federal awards. Applicants who hold a federal negotiated indirect cost rate or will be using the 10% *de minimis* rate must enter that information in one of the Organization Info section in eGrants; however, under section 121(d) of the NCSA and CNCS's regulations at 45 CFR. §2521.95 and 2540.110, no more than five percent of award funds may be used to recover indirect costs on AmeriCorps grants. See the *Application Instructions and Attachments* for more information.

## 1.5 Funding Restrictions

### 1.5.1 Types of Grants

The purpose of this document is to provide interested parties with information to enable them to prepare and submit a proposal for AmeriCorps\*State funding for the creation, expansion, or enhancement of programs that meet the requirements of the AmeriCorps national service program. The State, as represented by the

Board, intends to use the results of this process to award contracts for AmeriCorps\*State national service programs beginning in August or September 2019. These programs include AmeriCorps\*State Competitive, Professional Corps, Full-Time Fixed Amount, Education Award Program (EAP) Fixed-Amount grants, Cost Reimbursement, and AmeriCorps\*State Formula grants.

**AmeriCorps\*State Competitive Grants:** These grants are awarded to fund a portion of program costs and members' living allowance. AmeriCorps\*State competitive applications are submitted to the Board through this *RFP* process. Eligible applications are reviewed at the state level and then sent to CNCS where they are selected for funding or returned back to the state for further consideration under the formula grant process.

**AmeriCorps\*State Formula Grants:** Under this *RFP* AmeriCorps\*State formula applications are those applications not funded by CNCS in the competitive grant cycle. The State of Wisconsin receives an annual formula allocation of funds from CNCS. The Board determines which applications receive formula grants in the state of Wisconsin. To read about other funding opportunities available through the State Formula process, see section 3.6.

### 1.5.2 Member Living Allowance

A living allowance is not considered a salary or a wage. Programs are not required to provide a living allowance for members serving in less than full-time terms of service. If a program chooses to provide a living allowance to a less than full-time member, it must comply with the maximum limits in Table 1. For Cost Reimbursement grants, the amount must be included in the proposed budget as either CNCS or grantee share. Exceptions are noted below.

While Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to submit detailed budgets, they are still required to provide a living allowance to members that complies with the minimum and maximum requirements. Exceptions are noted below. Fixed Amount grant applicants are not required to indicate that amount in the application and should request those positions as "without living allowance" in the budget.

**Table 1: Minimum and Maximum Living Allowance**

<b>Service Term</b>	<b>Minimum # of Hours</b>	<b>Minimum Living Allowance</b>	<b>Maximum Total Living Allowance</b>
Full-time	1,700	\$13,992	\$27,984
Three Quarter-time	1,200	n/a	\$19,753
Half-time	900	n/a	\$14,815
Reduced Half-time	675	n/a	\$11,111
Quarter-time	450	n/a	\$7,408
Minimum-time	300	n/a	\$4,938

### ***Exceptions to the Living Allowance Requirements***

**1. Programs existing prior to Sept. 21, 1993** are not required to offer a living allowance. If an applicant chooses to offer a living allowance, it is exempt from the minimum requirement, but not the maximum requirement.

**2. EAP Grantees** are not required to provide a living allowance, but if a living allowance is provided, it must comply with the maximum requirements set forth in the Living Allowance Table above.

**3. Professional Corps Grantees** must provide members a living allowance or salary, which must meet the minimum, but may exceed the maximum living allowance set in the Living Allowance Table. Professional Corps member salaries and benefits including child care are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the application budget.

### 1.5.3 Maximum Cost per Member Service Year (MSY)

The CNCS cost per MSY is determined by dividing the CNCS share of budgeted grant costs by the number of MSYs requested. It does not include child care or the value of the education award a member may earn. The maximum amount an applicant may request from CNCS per MSY is determined on an annual basis.

New and recompetiting State Commission sub-grantees/applicants will be held to the maximum cost per MSY for their grant type.

**Table 2: Maximum Cost per MSY**

Grant Program	Maximum
Individual Competitive State/Territory Program (cost reimbursement)	\$15,192
Professional Corps Fixed Amount Grant	\$1,000*
Education Award Program Fixed Amount Grant	\$800
Full-time Fixed Amount Grant	\$15,192

*\*CNCS requires Professional Corps programs to cover the operating expenses associated with the AmeriCorps program through non-CNCS funds. CNCS will only consider operating funds of up to \$1,000 per MSY if an applicant is able to demonstrate in its narrative and supporting budget materials significant organizational financial need.*

*Cost reimbursement programs operating in rural communities (as defined in section 8.0) and cost reimbursement programs that recruit opportunity youth as AmeriCorps members may request up to \$15,360 cost per MSY for the AmeriCorps members that will be serving in rural areas or who are opportunity youth.*

#### **1.5.4 Segal AmeriCorps Education Award**

AmeriCorps members who successfully complete a term of service will be eligible for an Education Award from the National Service Trust. The amount of the Education Award is linked to the value of the Pell Grant. A member has up to seven years after his or her term of service to use the Education Award. CNCS will provide the updated Education Award amounts at the time of grant award.

## **2.0 PREPARING AND SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL**

This *RFP* should be read together with the AmeriCorps Regulations, 45 CFR. §§2520-2550, the *Application Instructions and Attachments*, and the *Performance Measure Instructions*, which are incorporated by reference. These documents can be found at <https://servewisconsin.wi.gov/Pages/Grants/AmeriCorpsRFP.aspx>. The full Regulations are available online at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov).

### **2.1 Content and Form of Application Submission**

Please note that single-state applicants that apply to Serve Wisconsin through this *RFP* have different deadlines, more required additional documents, and different instructions than CNCS. Please ensure that you use this *RFP* to complete your proposal to the Board and not the FY2019 *Notice of Funding Opportunity* from CNCS.

#### **2.1.1 How to Apply**

- Determine if you are a National Direct applicant that will apply directly to CNCS or a Single-State applicant that will apply through the Wisconsin State Commission (see section 1.3.2)
- Obtain a DUNS number, see section 2.1.2
- Register (or update) your organization with the System for Award Management, see section 2.1.2
- Submit a Notification of Intent to Apply, see section 2.1.3
- Establish an eGrants account, see section 2.2
- Write a high quality proposal that is responsive to this *RFP*
- Submit required additional documents
- Submit the application in eGrants

#### **2.1.2 Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM)**

Applications must include a DUNS number **and** an Employer Identification Number. The DUNS number does not replace an Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: [DUNS Request Service](#). CNCS recommends registering at least 30 days before the application due date.

After obtaining a DUNS number, all applicants **must** register with the SAM at [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov) and maintain an active SAM registration until the application process is complete and, if a grant is awarded, throughout the life of the award. SAM registration must be renewed annually. CNCS suggests finalizing a new registration or renewing an existing one at least three weeks before the application deadline to allow time to resolve any issues that may arise. Applicants must use their SAM-registered legal name and address on all grant applications to CNCS.

Applicants who do not comply with these requirements may be ineligible to receive or maintain an award.

See the SAM Quick Guide for Grantees at

[https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick Guide for Grants Registrations.pdf](https://sam.gov/sam/transcript/Quick%20Guide%20for%20Grants%20Registrations.pdf)

### 2.1.3 Notification of Intent to Apply

In order to gauge the number of applications we are likely to receive and to plan more efficiently for technical assistance and application review, all applicants, including continuation applicants, must submit a Notification of Intent to Apply via an online form. This may be accessed at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/19-20RFP>. All Notifications of Intent to Apply should receive an automated email response acknowledging receipt. If you do not receive an email acknowledging receipt, try again. If problems persist, send a message to [servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov).

### Submitting a Notification of Intent to Apply by 12:00 Midnight CT, October 25, 2018, is mandatory.

Applications submitted by applicants who have not submitted a Notification of Intent to Apply by the deadline will not be considered for funding.

### 2.1.4 Additional Documents

An application is only complete if it includes all required documentation and is received by the application due date. Incomplete applications will not be considered. **All required additional documents must be received by Serve Wisconsin at 1 West Wilson Street in Room B274, Madison, WI, by 4:30 PM CT on November 5, 2018. No exceptions will be made.**

Do not submit any supplementary materials that are not requested, such as videos, pictures, brochures, etc. The Board will not review or return them.

Applicants are required to submit the following additional documents by the application submission deadline:

All applicants:

- A copy of the most recent single audit for your organization, your organization's most recent financial audit or other financial statements if you have not had an audit. If a management letter was provided as part of your audit, it must be included with the audit you provide. Wisconsin state agencies and universities do not need to provide the State audit.
- Evaluation report, if required. Please see the Evidence Tiers definitions in section 8.0 and section 2.3.3.E. for further information.
- Labor Union Concurrence (if applicable)
  - If an applicant:
    - Proposes to serve as the placement site for AmeriCorps members; and
    - Has employees engaged in the same or substantially similar work as that proposed to be carried out by AmeriCorps members; and
    - Those employees are represented by a local labor organization, and then the application must include the written concurrence of the local labor organization representing those employees. Written concurrence can be in the form of a letter or email from the local union leadership.
  - If a program applicant:
    - Proposes to place AmeriCorps members at sites where they will be engaged in the same or substantially similar work as employees represented by a local labor organization, then the applicant must submit a written description of how it will ensure that:
      - AmeriCorps members won't be placed in positions that were recently occupied by paid staff.



- No AmeriCorps member will be placed into a position for which a recently resigned or discharged employee has recall rights as a result of a collective bargaining agreement, from which a recently resigned or discharged employee was removed as a result of a reduction in force, or from which a recently resigned/discharged employee is on leave or strike.
- Federal debt delinquency (if applicable). Applicants delinquent on federal debt must submit a complete explanation in Word or PDF format.
- Federally Approved Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)
- Cost Allocation Plan (if applicable)
- Permission to use federal funds as match (if applicable). If using other federal funds for match, documentation from the other federal entity showing that those federal funds are permitted to be used as match on an AmeriCorps grant
- Required Additional Checklists: Find these on the Serve Wisconsin website <https://serve.wisconsin.gov/Pages/Grants/AmeriCorpsRFP.aspx>
  - Additional Checklist A: Additional Documents Checklist \*
  - Additional Checklist B: Budget Checklist (N/A for Fixed-Amount and EAP applicants)
  - Additional Checklist C: Alignment with Wisconsin State Service Plan

*\* Though we expect you to submit this checklist with your documents, failure to include it will not disqualify an application.*

#### New and Recompeting applications

In addition to the required documents above, New and Recompeting applications must submit the following additional documents.

- Evaluation briefs, reports, studies. Please refer to section 2.3.3.B.2 Evidence Base and section 8.0 for detailed instructions by evidence tier.
- Organizational chart
- IRS Determination letter, and any amendments, reflecting approval or denial of tax-exempt status (if applicable)
- Financial Management Survey

#### Rural Intermediaries (New and recompeting)

- Letters of support from the consortium members

#### Entities applying on behalf of a Federally Recognized Tribe (New and recompeting)

- Sanctioning resolution adopted by the tribal council of each Indian Tribe.

Additional documents may be submitted by one of the following ways. Please choose only one method of submission:

1. Via email: Submit all additional required documents as an attachment via email to [serve.wisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:serve.wisconsin@wisconsin.gov). Submit all additional documents together with the following email subject line: 2019-20 AmeriCorps Proposal – [Organization Name] [AmeriCorps Program Name]. For staff and peer review reasons, electronic submission is the preferred option for your submission.
2. Paper: Send via parcel service or deliver in person all additional required documents in an envelope with the applicant organization name and program name noted on the outside of the envelope, to:

Serve Wisconsin  
Additional Documents – AmeriCorps 2019-20  
1 West Wilson Street, Room B274  
Madison, WI 53703-3445

Please note: applicants have had issues with the U.S. Postal Service delivering packages by the guaranteed delivery date; therefore, we do not recommend applicants rely on this service to submit their additional documents by the deadline.

Applications and additional documents submitted by fax will not be accepted.

Regardless of the method of submission, all additional documents must be **received** by Serve Wisconsin by 4:30 PM CT on November 5, 2018. Serve Wisconsin staff will date and time stamp required grant application document packets received via parcel delivery service or in-person upon receipt (timely submission of emailed document packets will be determined by the date and time the email was received by Serve Wisconsin) and will determine if all required documents have been submitted. If time allows, staff will notify the applicant of any missing or incomplete additional documents via email. It is the responsibility of the applicant, not the Board, to ensure that all documents are submitted on time. **Not submitting all of the required grant application documents by the deadline will result in disqualification of the application.** More information about the required additional documents can be found in the *Application Instructions and Attachments*.

#### **2.1.5 Submission Dates and Times**

The deadline for the receipt of all applications and additional documents under this *RFP* is **November 5, 2018 by 4:30 PM CT**.

Unless requested by the Board, no additional information will be accepted from an applicant after the deadline for submittal of applications.

#### **2.1.6 Late Applications**

Submitting an application after the deadline and/or not submitting all required grant application documents will result in disqualification of the application.

## **2.2 How to Submit an Application in eGrants**

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Applicants must submit their applications electronically via the CNCS web-based system, eGrants ([www.egrants.cns.gov](http://www.egrants.cns.gov)). Because it is a unique system, it is recommended that applicants create an eGrants account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible. Applicants should draft the application as a word processing document and copy and paste the document into the appropriate eGrants fields no later than 10 days before the deadline. Please note the length of a document in word processing software may be different than what will print out in eGrants. Serve Wisconsin and CNCS will consider the number of pages as they print out through eGrants when determining compliance with any page limits in this *RFP*.

Please see the *Application Instructions and Attachments* for more instructions on how to enter and submit your application in eGrants. CNCS also provides eGrants tutorials at [www.nationalservice.gov/resources](http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources), keyword: eGrants.

#### **2.2.1 Electronic Application Submission in eGrants**

Applicants must create and submit applications electronically via CNCS's web-based management system. It is recommended that applicants create an account and begin the application creation process as soon as possible to account for potential system errors.

The applicant's authorized representative must be the person who submits the application. The authorized representative must be using CNCS's web-based management system under his or her own account in order to sign and submit the application. A copy of the governing body's authorization for this official representative to sign must be on file in the applicant's office.

Contact the National Service Hotline at (800) 942-2677 or via the web form at [https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask\\_eg](https://questions.nationalservice.gov/app/ask_eg) if a problem arises when creating an account or preparing or submitting the application. Be prepared to provide the application ID, organization's name, and the Notice to which the organization is applying. If the issue cannot be resolved by the deadline, applicants must continue working with the National Service Hotline to submit their application via CNCS's web-based management system. You must then submit a brief paragraph including your eGrants ticket number issued to you by the National Service Hotline with your explanation of the technical issues that prevented you from submitting in eGrants by the deadline via email to [servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov) before the application submission deadline.



In the event of prolonged unavailability of the eGrants system on the date of submission, the Board reserves the right to extend the eGrants submission deadline. Any notice of extension of the deadline will be sent to all organizations that submitted a Notification of Intent to Apply and will be posted on the Board's website at [www.servewisconsin.wi.gov](http://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov)

## 2.3 Application Fields and Page Limits

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In eGrants, applicants will enter the following components of a complete application:

- Standard Form 424 (SF-424) Face Sheet: This is automatically generated when applicants complete the data elements in the eGrants system
- Narratives
  - Executive Summary
  - Program Design
  - Organizational Capability
  - Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy
  - Evaluation Plan (if applicable)
- Logic Model
- Performance Measures
- Budget
- Authorization, Assurances, and Certification

### 2.3.1 Page Limits

There are two page limits that must be adhered to: Narrative, Logic Model. No page limit applies to the narrative portion of the Evaluation Plan, Performance Measures, or the supplementary materials.

Serve Wisconsin and CNCS will consider the number of pages only as they print out from the "Review" tab in eGrants (where you will see the "View/Print your application" heading) when determining compliance for page limits. CNCS will not consider the results of any alternative printing methods in determining whether an application complies with the applicable page limits. CNCS strongly encourages applicants to print out the application from the "Review" page prior to submission to check that the application does not exceed the page limit.

**Please note that number of pages of a document in word processing software may be different than number of pages that will print out in eGrants.** When drafting your proposal in word processing software, use the following as a *guideline* for the font sizes, spacing, and margins in eGrants.

Margins: Top 1.56"; Bottom 1.0"; Left 1.0", Right 0.65"

Font: Georgia 11 point, 1.5 line spacing

This is only a guideline. Reviewers will not consider submitted material that is over the page limits in the printed report, even though eGrants allows an applicant to enter and submit text over the limit. Do not submit other information not requested in the *RFP* or *Application Instructions and Attachments*; the Board will not review it.

Narrative:

Applications may not exceed 10 pages for the Narratives or 13 pages for applications for Rural Intermediaries. In determining whether an application complies with page limits, CNCS and Serve Wisconsin will count the following for the narrative:

- The applicant's Executive Summary, SF-424 Face Sheet, and
- The Narrative portions contained in the Program Design, Organizational Capability, and Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections of the application.

Logic Model

The Logic Model may not exceed three pages when printed with the application from the "Review" tab in CNCS's web-based management system.

### 2.3.2 Assessment Criteria

Each applicant must describe a project that will deploy AmeriCorps members effectively to solve a significant community problem. The Board and CNCS urge applicants to submit high quality applications that carefully follow the guidance in this *RFP* and in the *Application Instructions and Attachments*. The quality of an application will be an important factor in determining whether an organization will receive funding.

### 2.3.3 Application Fields

#### A. Executive Summary (Required - 0 percent)

Please fill in the blanks of these sentences to complete the Executive Summary. Do not deviate from the template below.

The [Name of the organization] proposes to have [Number of] AmeriCorps members who will [service activities the members will be doing] in [the locations the AmeriCorps members will serve]. At the end of the first program year, the AmeriCorps members will be responsible for [anticipated outcome of project]. In addition, the AmeriCorps members will leverage [number of leveraged volunteers, if applicable] who will be engaged in [what the leveraged volunteers will be doing].

This program will focus on the CNCS focus area(s) of [Focus Area(s)].\* The CNCS investment of \$[amount of request] will be matched with \$[amount of projected match]\*\*, \$[amount of local, state, and federal funds] in public funding and \$[amount of non-governmental funds] in private funding.

*\*If the program is not operating in a CNCS focus area, omit this sentence.*

*\*\* Fixed Amount grant applicants (EAP, Full-Time Fixed Amount, No Cost Slots, and Professional Corps Fixed) should list their Other Revenue (see section 8.0) because they are not required to provide a specific amount of match, but still raise significant additional resources to operate the program. CNCS will post all Executive Summaries of awarded grant applications on [www.nationalservice.gov](http://www.nationalservice.gov) in the interest of transparency and Open Government.*

#### B. Program Design (50 percent)

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the criteria below. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value. For Serve Wisconsin's scoring criteria, please see *Appendix A – 2019-2020 AmeriCorps Peer Reviewer Form*.

##### 1. Theory of Change and Logic Model (28 points)

The Theory of Change shall address:

- The proposed intervention is responsive to the identified community problem.
- The applicant's proposed intervention is clearly articulated including the design, dosage, target population, and roles of AmeriCorps members and (if applicable) the roles of leveraged volunteers.
- The applicant's intervention is likely to lead to the outcomes identified in the applicant's theory of change.
- The expected outcomes articulated in the application narrative and Logic Model represent meaningful progress in addressing the community problem identified by the applicant.
- The rationale for utilizing AmeriCorps members to deliver the intervention(s) is reasonable.
- The service role of AmeriCorps members will produce significant contributions to existing efforts to address the stated problem.

The Logic Model shall depict:

- A summary of the community problem
- The inputs or resources that are necessary to deliver the intervention, including, but not limited to:
  - Locations or sites in which members will provide services
  - Number of AmeriCorps members who will deliver the intervention
- The core activities that define the intervention or program model that members will implement or deliver, including:
  - The duration of the intervention (e.g., the total number of weeks, sessions or months of the intervention)
  - The dosage of the intervention (e.g., the number of hours per session or sessions per week)

- The target population for the intervention (e.g., disconnected youth, third graders at a certain reading proficiency level)
- The measurable outputs that result from delivering the intervention (i.e. number of beneficiaries served, types and number of activities conducted.) If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as output indicators.
- Outcomes that demonstrate changes in knowledge/skill, attitude, behavior, or condition that occur as a result of the intervention. If applicable, identify which National Performance Measures will be used as outcome indicators.

Note: The logic model is a visual representation of the applicant's theory of change. Programs may include short, medium or long-term outcomes in the logic model. Applicants are not required to measure all components of their theory of change. The applicant's performance measures should be consistent with the program's theory of change and should represent significant program activities.

In the application narrative, applicants should discuss their rationale for setting output and outcome targets for their performance measures.

Rationales and justifications should be informed by the organization's performance data (e.g., program data observed over time that suggests targets are reasonable), relevant research (e.g. targets documented by organizations running similar programs with similar populations), or prior program evaluation findings.

Logic models are meant to be standalone sections of a proposal. Applicants should not assume that logic model reviewers have seen other portions of the application. Applicants with multiple interventions should complete one Logic Model chart which incorporates each intervention. Logic Model content that exceeds three pages will not be reviewed.

## **2. Evidence Base (16 points)**

The assessment of an applicant's evidence base has two parts. First, the applicant will be assigned to an evidence tier (see section 8.0.) Second, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the degree to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

Evidence Tier (8 points):

An evidence tier will be assessed for each applicant for the purpose of applying the strategic characteristics (moderate/strong evidence) and understanding the relative strength of each applicant's evidence base and the likelihood that the proposed intervention will lead to outcomes identified in the logic model.

In 2018, the evidence tiers of successful AmeriCorps State and National applicants that were competing were as follows: Strong 9%, Moderate 5%, Preliminary 40%, and Pre-Preliminary 46%. As these figures indicate, CNCS values and funds programs at all points along the evidence continuum and expects programs to progress along the evidence continuum over time. **Thus, do not be deterred from applying for funding due to your current evidence level.**

Applicants who have evaluation reports of the same intervention described in the application (see section 8.0 for a definition of "same intervention") may submit up to 2 of those reports, plus (if applicable) the evaluation report from their last three-year grant cycle, to qualify for the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tier. In order to qualify for consideration, the intervention evaluated in the submitted report(s) must match the intervention proposed by the applicant in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention
- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
- The context in which the intervention is delivered
- Outcomes of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points. Submission of additional documents that are not consistent with the guidance and requirements described in this *RFP* (e.g.,

advocacy pieces, policy briefs, other narratives that are not research studies or program evaluations) will not be reviewed.

In the Evidence Tier section of the application narrative, applicants must (1) summarize the study design and key findings of any evaluation report(s) submitted and (2) describe any other evidence that supports their program, including past performance measure data and/or other research studies that inform their program design. Applicants who submit evaluation reports for consideration must also describe in the Evidence Base section of the application narrative how the intervention described in the submitted reports is the same as the intervention described in the application (see section 8.0).

Applicants should provide citations for the studies they describe, if applicable; however, reviewers will not review any documents external to the application other than evaluation report(s) submitted in accordance with the *RFP* instructions.

Applicants must meet all requirements of an evidence tier in order to be considered for that tier.

If the evaluation reports submitted by the applicant do not meet the definitions (see section 8.0), the applicant may be considered for a lower evidence tier. **Applicants that have collected data relevant to their program intervention must include a description of that data for any evidence tier to which they qualify.**

#### Evidence Quality (8 points)

After the applicant's evidence tier has been assessed, the quality of the applicant's evidence and the extent to which it supports the proposed program design will be assessed and scored.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Preliminary, Moderate, or Strong evidence tiers, reviewers will score the submitted evaluation reports using the following standards:

- The submitted reports are of satisfactory methodological quality and rigor for the type of evaluation conducted (e.g., adequate sample size and statistical power, internal and/or external validity, appropriate use of control or comparison groups, etc.);
- The submitted reports describe evaluations that were conducted relatively recently, preferably within the last six years;
- The submitted reports show a meaningful and significant positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

For applicants who are assessed as being in the Pre-Preliminary evidence tier, reviewers will score the narrative provided in the Evidence Base section of the application using the following standards:

- The applicant uses relevant evidence, including past performance measure data and/or cited research studies, to inform their proposed program design;
- The described evidence is relatively recent, preferably from the last six years;
- The evidence described by the applicant indicates a meaningful positive effect on program beneficiaries in at least one key outcome of interest.

All applicants, including new grantees, are required to provide additional information in the Evaluation Plan field of the application (See section E. Evaluation Plan); however, information provided in the Evaluation Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed until after funding decisions have been made.

### **3. Notice Priority (0 points)**

- The applicant's proposed program fits within one or more of the AmeriCorps funding priorities as outlined in section 1.1.3 and more fully described in section 8.0.
- The proposed program meets all of the requirements detailed in section 1.1.3 and in section 8.0.

### **4. Member Experience (6 points)**

- AmeriCorps members will gain skills as a result of their training and service that can be utilized and will be valued by future employers after their service term is completed.
- The program will recruit AmeriCorps members from the geographic or demographic communities in which the program operates.

- The applicant will foster an inclusive service culture where different backgrounds, talents, and capabilities are welcomed and leveraged for learning and effective service delivery.

### **C. Organizational Capability (25 percent)**

Reviewers will consider the quality of the application's response to the following criteria. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

#### **1. Organizational Background and Staffing (9 points)**

- The organization details the roles, responsibilities, and structure of the staff that will be implementing the AmeriCorps program as well as providing oversight and monitoring for the program.

**This criterion will be assessed based on the budget submitted. No narrative should be entered in the narrative box except for "See budget."**

#### **2. Compliance and Accountability (8 points)**

- The organization has a monitoring and oversight plan to prevent and detect non-compliance and enforce compliance with AmeriCorps rules and regulations including those related to prohibited and unallowable activities and criminal history checks at the grantee, subgrantee (if applicable), and service site locations.
- The CNCS-required evaluation report meets CNCS requirements (if applicable).
- The CNCS-required evaluation report is of satisfactory quality (if applicable).

#### **3. Culture that Values Learning (6 points)**

- The applicant's board, management, and staff collect and use information, including performance data, for learning and decision making.

#### **4. Member Supervision (2 points)**

- AmeriCorps members will receive sufficient guidance and support from their supervisor to provide effective service.
- AmeriCorps supervisors will be adequately trained/prepared to follow AmeriCorps and program regulations, priorities, and expectations.

### **D. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 percent)**

Reviewers will assess the quality of the application's budget based on the following criteria. Do not assume all sub-criteria are of equal value.

#### **1. Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (25 points)**

- Budget is submitted without mathematical errors and proposed costs are allowable, reasonable, and allocable to the award.
- Budget is submitted with adequate information to assess how each line item is calculated.
- Budget is in compliance with the budget instructions.
- Match is submitted with adequate information to support the amount written in the budget.
- The budgeted match is equal to or more than the required match for the given program year.
- The cost per MSY is equal to or less than the maximum cost per MSY

Proposed budgets that contain MSY costs that exceed the maximum cost per MSY and/or less than required match will be considered unresponsive to the application criteria.

Applicants must complete the budget and ensure the following information is in the budget screens:

- Current indirect cost rate if used to claim indirect/administrative costs.
- Identify the non-CNCS funding and resources necessary to support the project, including for Fixed Amount applicants.
- Indicate the amount of non-CNCS resource commitments, type of commitments (in-kind and/or cash) and the sources of these commitments, and if the commitments are proposed or secured.

### **E. Evaluation Plan (Required for recompeting grantees - 0 points)**

If the applicant is competing for the first time, please provide a data collection plan in the "Evaluation Plan" field that includes the following:

- A description of the applicant's data collection system and how it is sufficient to collect high quality performance measurement data during the first three years of the grant. If the applicant does not yet have a data collection system, describe the plan and timeline for developing a high quality system.
- A description of how the applicant will use performance data (including CNCS performance measures and other process and outcome measures if applicable) to improve its program in the first three years of funding.

First-time applicants should be aware that CNCS may require submission of data collection instruments if a grant is approved for funding. For more information about how to develop a high-quality data collection plan, visit the CNCS Knowledge Network.

Evaluation plan requirements for applicants that are not competing for the first time includes the following:

- If the applicant has been competitively funded for at least three years and if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project" (see section 8.0) the applicant must submit an evaluation plan.
- If the applicant has **not** been competitively funded for at least three years and if it satisfies the CNCS definition of "same project", it will **not** be required to submit an evaluation plan or completed evaluation report.
- If the applicant has been competitively funded for at least six years for the same project, the applicant will be required to submit an evaluation report as well as an evaluation plan for the upcoming 3-year grant.

The evaluation report must be submitted with the required additional documents by the deadline (see section 2.1.4). The evaluation plan is to be included in the Evaluation Plan field in eGrants. Formula funded applications are not subject to the evaluation requirements that are described in this section.

Evaluation plans must include as much information as possible for each of the following (see *Frequently Asked Questions: Evaluation*, available at <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/cncs-evaluation-policies>):

- A short description of the theory of change - why the proposed intervention is expected to produce the proposed results;
- Outcome(s) of interest - clear and measurable outcomes that are aligned with the theory of change and will be assessed during the evaluation;
- Research questions to be addressed by the study - concrete research questions (or hypotheses) that are clearly connected to the outcomes;
- Proposed research design for the evaluation including a rationale for the design selected, an assessment of its strengths and limitations, and a description of the main components
- Description of the data sources, sampling methods, measurement tools, and data collection procedures that will be used in the evaluation
- Analysis plan that clearly describes the methodology/ies that will be used to analyze the collected data
- A timeline for the evaluation that describes how the evaluation will cover at least one year of CNCS-funded activity and will be completed within the three-year timeframe of the grant
- Qualifications needed for the evaluator; and
- The estimated budget.

Information provided in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field will not be scored and will not be reviewed by CNCS until after funding decisions have been made.

For more information about evaluation plans, visit the CNCS Knowledge Network's Evaluation Resources: <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/evaluation/planning-evaluation>.

The evaluation requirements differ depending on the amount of the grant, as described in 45 CFR. §2522.700-710:

- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee (other than an Education Award Program grantee), and its average annual CNCS program grant is \$500,000 or more, it must arrange for an external impact evaluation of the program (see section 8.0), and it must submit the

evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in CFR. §2522.730.

- If the applicant is a State/Territory subgrantee and/or National Direct Grantee whose average annual CNCS program grant is less than \$500,000, or an Education Award Program Grantee, it must conduct an internal or an external evaluation of the program, and it must submit the evaluation with any subsequent application to CNCS for competitive funds as required in CFR. §2522.730.

The “Evaluation Plan” field of eGrants does not count towards the page limit for the application; however, it does have a set character limit of 10,000 characters. Applicants should print out the plan to ensure the narrative does not exceed the character limits when entered in CNCS’s web-based management system.

State/Territory subgrantees and/or National Direct Grantees that are recompeting for funds are eligible to apply for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. Grantees requesting approval of an alternative evaluation approach should submit a request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach along with their evaluation plan in the Evaluation Plan field in eGrants. The request should clearly explain: (a) the evaluation constraints faced by the program, (b) why the proposed approach is the most rigorous option feasible, and (c) how the proposed alternative approach will help the grantee build their evidence base. Evaluation plans should include, at a minimum, the required elements listed in this *RFP*. The evaluation plan must be consistent with the information submitted in the competitive funding application and in the request for approval of an alternative evaluation approach. More information on alternative evaluation approaches can be found at: <https://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/resource/Alternative-Evaluation-Approach-Guidance-FINAL-5.17.17.pdf>.

If the request for the alternative evaluation approach plus the Evaluation Plan itself will exceed the character limit of the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants, the applicant should do the following:

- Enter the Evaluation Plan in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field in eGrants.
- Include a note in the Evaluation Summary or Plan field stating that the applicant is requesting an alternative evaluation approach.
- Include the alternative evaluation approach at the END of the application narrative with the heading “REQUEST FOR ALTERNATIVE EVALUATION APPROACH.” This section of the application narrative will not count against the page limit.

#### **F. Amendment Justification (0 percent)**

Enter N/A. This field will be used if the applicant is awarded a grant and needs to amend it.

#### **G. Clarification Information (0 percent)**

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter information that requires clarification in the post-review period.

#### **H. Continuation Changes (0 percent)**

Enter N/A. This field will be used to enter changes in the application narratives in continuation requests.

## **2.4 Procuring and Contracting Agency**

This Request for Proposals (*RFP*) is issued by the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board, which is the sole point of contact for the State of Wisconsin during the selection process. The person responsible for managing the *RFP* process is Casey Sweeney, Program Officer. All contracts resulting from this *RFP* will be administered by the Board.

## **2.5 Clarification and/or Revisions to the Specifications and Requirements**

Any questions or inquiries concerning this *RFP* must be received **in writing by 12:00 Midnight CT on November 1, 2018**. Questions will not be accepted via telephone. Please submit all questions and inquiries to the RFP Manager:

Email: [servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov)

#### **U.S. Postal Service or other Carriers:**

RFP Manager

Wisconsin National & Community Service Board

1 West Wilson Street, Room B274

Applicants are expected to raise any questions, exceptions, or additions they have concerning the *RFP* document by 12:00 Midnight CT on November 1, 2018. All questions asked by applicants with corresponding answers will be released periodically at <https://servewisconsin.wi.gov/Pages/Grants/AmeriCorpsRFP.aspx>. The final posting of Questions and Answers will occur on November 2, 2018. After November 1, only specific eGrants technical assistance may be given.

If an applicant discovers any significant ambiguity, error, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other deficiency in this *RFP*, the applicant should immediately notify the RFP Manager of such error and request a modification or clarification of the initial *RFP*.

Each proposal shall stipulate that it is predicated upon the requirements, terms, and conditions of this *RFP* and any supplements or revisions thereof.

Any contact with Serve Wisconsin staff or Board members concerning this *RFP* is prohibited, except as authorized by the RFP Manager during the period from the date of release of the *RFP* until the Board approves final grant applications for AmeriCorps funding for the 2019-2020 program year.

## 2.6 Technical Assistance

Serve Wisconsin intends to provide technical assistance to ensure that strong proposals are developed. The following policies will be followed as a fair process for the provision of technical assistance:

1. Technical Assistance will be equally available to all prospective applicants.
2. Staff will only respond to applicants who have reviewed the available written materials and have a specific question to be answered. Questions may only be submitted in writing (see section 2.5).
3. Staff will only provide answers to specific questions and make general comments regarding the Regulations and *RFP*, as opposed to providing specific programmatic suggestions for a particular applicant.
4. Staff will not review proposal drafts.
5. In compliance with federal regulations regarding conflict of interest, WNCBSB Board members will not provide any form of technical assistance to a potential grant applicant. Instead, they will refer applicants to the RFP Manager.
6. Serve Wisconsin will provide applicants with technical assistance on entering and submitting proposals in CNCS's web-based grants management system and will provide guidance on how to access assistance from the National Service Hotline.

## 2.7 Reasonable Accommodations

Upon request, reasonable accommodations will be provided by the Board including the provision of information materials in an alternative format for individuals with disabilities. For special needs, contact Casey Sweeney at 608-266-5116 or [servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov).

## 2.8 Calendar of Events

Listed below are specific and estimated dates and times of actions related to this *RFP*. The actions with specific dates must be completed as indicated unless otherwise changed by the Board. There may or may not be a formal notification issued for changes in estimated dates and times. Meeting dates will be posted on the Board's Web site at [www.servewisconsin.wi.gov](http://www.servewisconsin.wi.gov), and all meetings are publicized as open meetings.

### **DATE   EVENT**

October 4, 2018	Date of Issue of <i>RFP</i>
October 17, 2018	Technical Assistance Webinar – RFP Updates
October 18, 2018	Technical Assistance Webinar – New Applicants
<b>October 25, 2018 (12:00 midnight CT)</b>	<b>Notification of Intent to Apply due to Serve Wisconsin</b>
TBD	Technical Assistance Webinar Provided by WEC
TBD	Technical Assistance Webinar Provided by WEC
November 1, 2018 (12:00 midnight CT)	Last day for submitting written inquiries regarding this <i>RFP</i>
November 2, 2018	Final Questions & Answers from applicants available online



<b>November 5, 2018 (4:30 PM CT)</b>	<b>Applications and additional documents due to Serve Wisconsin</b>
<b>November 5, 2018 (4:30 PM CT)</b> TBD	<b>Alternative Match Requests Due</b> (if applicable, via email) Program Evaluation & Development Committee meeting, Madison
December 13, 2018	<b>All recommended applicants are required to present to committee</b> WNCSB Board meeting
December 14, 2018	Board-approved applications returned for revisions
<b>January 9, 2019</b>	<b>Revisions due to Serve Wisconsin for Board-approved applications;</b> there may be further rounds of revisions after this date
January 30, 2019	Board-approved applications due to CNCS
April 1, 2019	Date by which CNCS expects to make notification of Competitive awards
Spring 2019	Submission of Continuation Formula applications
May 2019	Program Evaluation & Development Committee and WNCSB Board meetings to determine Formula grants
Summer 2019	Formula applications due to CNCS

## 2.9 Contract Term and Funding

Unless CNCS delays award notification, funds awarded under this solicitation will be for a period of one year starting August 15, 2019 or September 1, 2019, and ending August 14, 2020 or August 31, 2020, respectively.

## 2.10 Oral Presentations

Representatives for all applications that pass the State level peer review and program performance evaluation and are recommended to the Board for funding will be required to provide a short, 5-minute presentation to the Board's Program Evaluation & Development Committee at their December 2018 meeting in Madison, WI. The presentation should summarize the application. Board members may also ask applicants questions regarding their applications. The date and location of this meeting will be sent to all recommended applicants when it is available.

There are no limits to the number of individuals applicants may send to this meeting, and it is recommended that the individuals who are the most knowledgeable about the program and application attend the meeting. Applicant representatives should not distribute supplementary materials (i.e., reports, pictures, brochures, etc.) to Committee/Board members during the oral presentation period.

## 2.11 Incurring Costs

The State of Wisconsin is not liable for any cost incurred by applicants replying to this *RFP*.

## 2.12 Withdrawal of Proposals

Proposals shall be irrevocable until contract award unless the proposal is withdrawn. Applicants may withdraw a proposal in writing at any time. A written request to withdraw the proposal must be signed by an authorized representative of the applicant organization and submitted to the RFP Manager. If a previously submitted proposal is withdrawn before the proposal due date and time, the applicant may submit another proposal at any time up to the proposal closing date and time.

## 3.0 PROPOSAL SELECTION AND AWARD PROCESS

The Board selects applications using an extensive, multi-stage review and selection process. This process includes Board, staff, and peer review and evaluation of pre-determined performance indicators. This section describes the application review and selection process.

In accordance with State Statute 16.22(2)(h), the Board must give priority to the greatest extent practicable to persons providing youth corps programs when awarding grants. The Board has enacted the following policy: when considering applications for AmeriCorps grant funding, if two applicants are approximately equal in performance and one of the two programs is a youth corps, then the youth corps program shall be given priority over the other program. Under this policy, two applications shall be considered approximately

equal if there is a difference of two percentage points or less between their percentages of points earned. For applications that are approximately equal, the Board may consider other factors including, but not limited to: youth corps priority; compliance issues; program start date; program location; demographic factors; public or private non-profit registered in Wisconsin; State Service Plan; program expansion.

### 3.1 Preliminary Staff Review – Timely Submission

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Serve Wisconsin staff will date and time stamp required grant application document packets received via parcel delivery service or in-person upon receipt (timely submission of emailed document packets will be determined by the date and time the email was received by Serve Wisconsin) and will determine if all required documents have been submitted. If time allows, staff will notify the applicant of any missing or incomplete additional documents via email. It is the responsibility of the applicant, not the Board, to ensure that all documents are submitted on time. Board staff will also document a list of grant applications that were submitted by the deadline in eGrants. Applications submitted by eligible organizations by the deadline and that include all required grant application documents will continue in the selection process. **Submitting an application after the deadline and/or not submitting all required grant application documents on time will result in disqualification of the application.**

### 3.2 Proposal Review for Continuation Competitive Applications

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Since CNCS currently funds these projects, these organizations are only required to submit continuation requests and required additional documents that will be reviewed by Board staff. A recommendation for funding will be made to the Board without peer review; however, Continuation Applicants will be subject to performance score review (see section 3.3.2).

After the Board approves the continuation applications, the applications will then be sent to CNCS for review. CNCS will make the final determination as to whether an applicant will continue to receive funding or will be declined. If a continuation application is declined at the federal level, the application will be considered for Formula funding under this *RFP*, if eligible.

### 3.3 Proposal Review for All Other Applications (not Continuations)

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If your organization is not applying for Continuation Competitive funding and unless eligible for and applying for Continuation Formula funding (see section 3.6), your organization will be submitting a New or Recompete application. After review for timely submission, the next steps are the concurrent state level peer review process and the Serve Wisconsin staff technical review process. New and recompetite applications are peer reviewed by outside experts including community service practitioners, educators, administrators, and former national service participants. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest. If you are a current AmeriCorps Grantee, do not assume that peer reviewers are familiar with your program.

Serve Wisconsin staff complete a technical review of all sections of the application narrative, logic model, performance measures, and budget. Staff will prepare funding recommendations to the Board based on the results of the staff technical review and state level peer review. Following final Board approval of applications, staff may request technical changes to applications.

#### 3.3.1 State Level Peer Review

In evaluating your application for funding, peer reviewers will only assess the program design section of the narrative and logic model. Application Peer Review Forms, included in this *RFP* as Appendix A, are used for the state level peer review process. Note that the peer review format in Appendix A is revised annually to reflect changes in CNCS's *NOFO* related to the program design portion of the application narrative. The point values in the Peer Review Form are doubled from the points values listed in this *RFP*. The state peer reviewers do not review the Organizational Capability or Cost Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy sections; therefore, point values are increased in order to reach 100 total possible points.

Proposals will be scheduled for review by at least 3 peer reviewers, and the reviewers' scores are then averaged for each application. An application must receive an average peer score of 80 or above to be considered by the Board for submission as a New or Recompete Competitive Application. The Board will consider all applications receiving an average score of 80 or above if they also pass the Performance Scoring Evaluation and may recommend any or all for submission as a New or Recompete Competitive Application. **An application that receives an average score of fewer than 80 points will be ineligible for**

**further consideration.** Reaching the 80 point threshold is inclusive of rounding to two places after the decimal point.

### **3.3.2 Performance Scoring Evaluation**

Performance scoring percentages will be considered by the Board for applications requesting funding to continue existing programs including recompetes and continuation applications. A program's performance is based on the following criteria: enrollment and retention rates; 30-Day compliance with enrolling and exiting members; meeting performance measure targets; and timeliness of reporting.

Recompete applications that have a performance scoring percentage less than 80% (inclusive of rounding to two places after the decimal point) will be eliminated from further consideration for Competitive funding, unless the Board decides to waive the 80% requirement based on evidence of a corrective action plan to include benchmarks and associated milestones. The Board could choose to recommend to CNCS that the application be funded based on the corrective action plan. An exception to the 80% minimum shall apply to applicants proposing a new and not previously funded AmeriCorps project, and shall apply for the first three years that the new/not previously funded project is funded. The exception for such new projects shall not preclude use of other criteria to determine appropriateness of funding such new projects.

An exception to the 80% minimum also applies to Continuation Competitive applications (see section 3.2). As approved by the Board, any Continuation Competitive application that has a performance scoring percentage less than 80% (inclusive of rounding to two places after the decimal point) will be eliminated from further consideration for Competitive funding, unless the Board decides to waive the 80% requirement based on evidence of a corrective action plan to include benchmarks and associated milestones. The Board could choose to recommend to CNCS that the application be funded based on this plan.

### **3.3.3 Post Review Quality Control**

After the peer review is complete, Serve Wisconsin staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control review. This additional level of review may be used for applications with peer review scores that would impact an application's ability to meet the established threshold.

Quality Control reviewers may be Serve Wisconsin staff not involved in the technical review of the application and/or individuals with qualifications similar to those of peer reviewers. The Quality Control reviewer(s) will provide an assessment of the application's key strengths and weaknesses.

### **3.3.4 Ranking of Applications for New and Recompete Competitive Consideration**

Prior to sending New and Recompete applications to the federal level for competitive review, CNCS requires state commissions to rank proposals. The Board must prioritize the proposals based on their relative quality.

The proposed ranking of New and Recompete applications will be provided to the Board as part of their December 13, 2018 meeting. Average application score and fit in Wisconsin's portfolio criteria for all applicants plus performance scoring for existing programs will be considered for ranking of Competitive applications. Performance scoring percentage and fit in Wisconsin's portfolio criteria will be used to break any tie for the number one ranking position. Fit in Wisconsin's portfolio criteria includes, but is not limited to: program location, program focus, cost efficiency, public or private non-profit registered in Wisconsin, and staff capacity.

All applications approved by the Board will be sent to CNCS for review by their January 30, 2019 deadline.

## **3.4 CNCS Review and Selection Process**

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### **3.4.1 Review Process**

CNCS will make determination about applicants utilizing the data provided within the application and supplemental materials. These determinations may be different than what the applicant self-determined upon submission of its application.

#### **A. Compliance and Eligibility Review**

CNCS staff will conduct a Compliance Review to determine if an application meets the compliance requirements as detailed in this *RFP* and advances to the next stage of the review process. Applications determined non-compliant will not be considered for funding. An application is compliant if the applicant:

- Is an eligible organization
- Submits an application and all required additional documents by the application submission deadline
- Submits an application that is complete, in that it contains all required elements and additional documents and follows the instructions provided in this *RFP*

Reviewing for eligibility is intended to ensure that only those applications that are eligible for award are further reviewed. However, a determination of eligibility can take place at any point during the application review and selection process. Applicants that are determined to be non-compliant and ineligible will not receive an award.

## **B. CNCS Review**

Each application will be assessed by several CNCS staff. Staff reviewers will evaluate the application using the application review criteria, consider the comprehensiveness and feasibility of the application, and assess the priorities and strategic considerations detailed in the *RFP*. External reviewers will review and assess the evidence base criteria noted in the *RFP*. All reviewers will be screened for conflicts of interest.

## **C. Post Review Quality Control**

After the reviewers complete their assessment, CNCS staff will review the results for fairness and consistency. Some applications may be selected for a Quality Control assessment. This additional level of review may be used to assess applications ranked first by a State Commission and received low scores (unless the Commission only submitted one application) and applications for which there are significant panel anomalies. In addition, the State Commission input on National Direct applications will be reviewed and assessed.

## **D. Risk Assessment Evaluation**

CNCS staff will evaluate the risks to the program posed by each applicant, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds and the applicant's past performance (if applicable). This evaluation is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this evaluation will inform funding decisions. If CNCS determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award. In evaluating risks, CNCS may consider the following, but not limited to:

- Financial capability and capacity to manage Federal funds
- Quality of financial management systems and ability to meet the administrative standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
- History of performance as reflected in the applicant's record in managing previous CNCS awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
  - Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements,
  - If applicable, meeting matching requirements
  - If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
- Information available through any OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as—
  - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
  - U.S. Treasury Bureau of Fiscal Services
  - Dun and Bradstreet
  - "Do Not Pay," and/or
  - System for Award Management
- Reports and findings from single audits performed under Uniform Administrative Guidance and findings of any other available audits
- IRS Tax Form 990
- An applicant organization's annual report
- Publicly available information including information from an applicant organization's website
- Any other information listed in CFR. §2522.140
- The applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements

- Responses to the Financial Management Survey and supporting documentation
- Past Performance

State Commission staff will assess their recompeting subgrantees' past performance and submit those assessments to CNCS. This assessment is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for funding or the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this assessment will inform funding decisions. In evaluating programmatic performance, CNCS will consider the following for applicants that are current formula and competitive grantees:

- Grant Progress Reports – attainment of Performance Measures
- Enrollment and Retention
- Compliance with 5-day enrollment and 30-day exit requirements in the AmeriCorps portal
- Site visit or other monitoring findings (if applicable)
- OIG findings (if applicable)
- Significant opportunities and/or risks of the grantee related to national service
- Commission Rank

Additionally, CNCS may use the results of the review of the risk assessment evaluation in determining which applications to fund. If CNCS concludes that the reasons for applicants having poor risk assessment evaluations are not likely to be mitigated, those applications may not be selected for funding.

#### **E. Clarification Process**

Some applicants may receive requests to provide clarifying information and/or make changes to their application, including changes to the budget. This information is used by CNCS staff in making funding recommendations. Applications may be recommended for funding even if they are not asked clarification questions. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to requests for clarification adequately and in a timely manner may result in the removal of applications from consideration.

#### **3.4.2 Selection for Funding**

The assessment of applications involves a wide range of factors and considerations. CNCS staff will apply their experience and expertise in evaluating and recommending applications. CNCS will engage external reviewers to provide insight and input with respect to the evidence base of eligible applicants. In the end, the review and selection process will produce a diversified set of high-quality programs that reflect the priorities and strategic considerations described in this *RFP*.

Specifically, the review and selection process will:

- A. Identify how well eligible applications are aligned with application review criteria and/or represent relative risk and/or opportunity.
- B. Yield a diversified portfolio based on the following strategic considerations:
  - Meaningful representation of
    - Geographic diversity
    - Rural communities (see definition in section 8.0)
    - Single and multi-state programs
    - Faith-based organizations
  - CNCS *Notice* Priorities representation
  - Focus area representation
  - Moderate and Strong evidence levels
  - Program models that demonstrate a new approach to solving a community problem based on thorough review of existing research and evaluation about existing approaches to the problem

Based on the evaluation of these strategic considerations, applications may be selected for funding over applications with a greater degree of alignment with the review criteria. In selecting applicants to receive awards under the criteria in this *RFP*, the CNCS Chief Executive Officer will endeavor to include a diverse portfolio of applications based on staff evaluations, recommendations, priorities, and strategic considerations.

*CNCS reserves the right to adjust or make changes to their review process, in the event that unforeseen challenges or exigent circumstances make it impossible, impractical, or inefficient to execute the review process as planned. Any such adjustments or changes will not affect the selection criteria that will be used to assess applications submitted to CNCS in response to criteria in this RFP.*

### **3.4.3 Consideration of Integrity and Performance System Information**

Prior to making any award that exceeds \$150,000, CNCS is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM and FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313). Additionally CNCS may expand upon these requirements and use its discretion to review and consider information about any applicant receiving an award, including those under \$150,000.

Any applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through FAPIIS and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through FAPIIS.

CNCS will consider any comments by any applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing its review of risk posed by the applicant under section 3.4.1 D.

### **3.4.4 Feedback to Applicants**

Following grant awards, each applicant will receive summary comments pertaining to their application. Feedback will be based on the review of the original application and will not reflect any information that may have been provided in response to clarification questions, if any. All compliant applications will receive feedback from the external review of the evidence base portion of their application.

### **3.4.5 Transparency in Grant-making**

CNCS is committed to transparency in grantmaking. The following information pertaining to this competition for new and recompeting applications will be published on the CNCS website (<http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/open-government-initiative/transparency/results-grants-competition>), within 90 business days after all grants are awarded:

- A list of all compliant applications submitted
- Executive Summaries of all compliant applications submitted by the applicants
- Data extracted from the SF-424 Face Sheet and the submitted program narratives for successful applications
- A blank template of the external review worksheet
- A list of external reviewers that completed the review process
- A summary of external reviewers comments for successful applications.

## **3.5 CNCS Award Administration Information**

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### **3.5.1 Federal Award Notice**

CNCS will make awards following the grant selection announcement. Please see section 2.8 for the date CNCS anticipates announcing the results of this competition, contingent on timely full year appropriations. Applicants will be notified of funding via email. This notification is not an authorization to begin grant activities. The Notice of Grant Award signed by the Grant Officer is the only document authorizing awardees to commence grant activities. Unsuccessful applicants will also receive a notification that their application was not approved for competitive funding from CNCS.

An awardee may not obligate or expend federal funds until the start of the Project Period identified on the Notice of Grant Award.

### **3.5.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

#### **A. Uniform Guidance**



All awards under the criteria in this *RFP* are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance), now consolidated in 2 CFR 200 and 2205.

## **B. Requests for Improper Payment Information**

CNCS may, from time to time, request documentation from recipients in order to monitor the award or to comply with other legal requirements, such as the Improper Payments Information Act of 2002, as amended. Failure to make timely responses to these requests may result in award funds being placed on temporary manual hold, reimbursement only, or other remedies as appropriate. In addition, CNCS may, in appropriate circumstances, consider in its funding decisions any previous failures to make timely responses.

## **C. CNCS Terms and Conditions**

All awards made under the criteria in this *RFP* will be subject to the 2019 CNCS General Terms and Conditions, and the 2019 AmeriCorps Program Specific Terms and Conditions. These Terms and Conditions contain detailed, mandatory compliance and reporting requirements. Current versions of the CNCS General and Specific Terms and Conditions for each of its programs is available at <https://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/terms-and-conditions-cnccs-grants>.

### **3.5.3 National Service Criminal History Check Requirements**

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) is a screening procedure established by law to protect the beneficiaries of national service. The law requires recipients to conduct and document NSCHCs on any person (including award-funded staff, national service participants, or volunteers) receiving a salary, living allowance, stipend or education award through a program receiving CNCS funds. This includes staff who receive part of their salary through a subgrant. An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives CNCS funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder. The cost of conducting NSCHCs is an allowable expense under the award. Please budget at least \$54 plus the cost of a state check per covered individual (staff and members) on the CNCS share of the budget.

Unless CNCS has provided a recipient with a written exemption or written approval of an alternative search procedure, recipients must perform the following checks –

All award-funded staff, national service participants and volunteers must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW) *and*
2. *Either*
  - a. A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *or*
  - b. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

### **Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations**

Award-funded staff, national service participants, and volunteers with *recurring access to vulnerable populations* (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; *and*
2. Both
  - a. A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; *and*
  - b. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Additionally, all national service participants serving in a program funded through the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board must undergo a check of the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access website. This is not required for grant-funded staff.

See 45 CFR. §2540.200 - §2540.207 and <http://www.nationalservice.gov/resources/criminal-history-check> for complete information and FAQs. Vendor checks (checks performed by commercial vendors) are often noncompliant with these requirements. Inability of a grantee to demonstrate that they have conducted an NSOPW and other required criminal history checks, as specified in CNCS's regulations, may result in a disallowance of all or part of the costs associated with noncompliance.

#### 3.5.4 Use of Material

To ensure that materials generated with CNCS funding are available to the public and readily accessible to grantees and non-grantees, CNCS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to obtain, use, modify, reproduce, publish, or disseminate publications and materials produced under the award, including data, and to authorize others to do so (2 CFR § 200.315 (b)).

#### 3.5.5 Reallocation of Funding

CNCS reserves the right to reallocate funding in the event of disaster or other compelling need for service.

### 3.6 State Formula Funding

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Applications sent to the federal level for competitive review and declined for funding by CNCS will be considered for State Formula funding if they meet the requirements detailed below and in Appendices B and C.

**In order to be eligible for Formula funding through the Board, an applicant shall be one of the following at the time of application for Formula funds:** Wisconsin state or local government entity, or one of the following if its governing body operates within the state of Wisconsin: a federally recognized Indian Tribe, a public or private nonprofit organization (organized as a tax-exempt entity under the federal IRS Code, including religious organizations and labor organizations), or an institution of higher education as defined in Wisconsin Statute 118.55(1). The only exception to this policy would be for an annual Formula process in which all other possible Formula funding options have been considered and Formula funding remains unallocated. In cases where Formula funds would otherwise remain unallocated, those funds could be provided to an entity that does not meet the requirements of this policy.

**Continuation Formula Funding:** Currently funded Formula programs (for the 2018-2019 program year) may choose to apply for Continuation Formula funding for 2019-2020. The following programs are eligible to apply for continuation formula funding: College Possible – STEP; North Central Community Action Program; Teach for America – Milwaukee; United Way of Dane County – Schools of Hope; United Way Fox Cities; UW-Eau Claire – Blugold Beginnings; Western Dairyland Economic Opportunity Council; WI DPI – Farm to School; WI Primary Health Care Association; and WisCorps, Inc.

An eligible applicant may apply for up to two years of Continuation Formula funding, for a maximum of three consecutive years of Formula funding. After three consecutive years of Formula funding, the program would be required to apply for Competitive funding for the following year of funding. Formula funded grantees are not required to apply for second and third year Continuation Formula funding and can choose to apply for Competitive funding instead of applying for a second or third year of Continuation Formula funding.

Continuation Formula applications are subject to the requirements in Appendices B and C. Continuation Formula applicants must submit a Notification of Intent to Apply by the deadline specified in section 2.1.3, although actual submission of the Continuation Formula application will not occur until spring 2019. Continuation Formula applicants will be required to provide a short, 5-minute presentation to the Board's Program Evaluation & Development Committee at the meeting during which the Committee will consider applications for Formula funding.

Additionally, there may be opportunities for new AmeriCorps programs and/or AmeriCorps Planning Grants to be funded through a State Formula process if Formula funds remain unallocated. If formula funds remain unallocated, an additional Request for Proposals may be issued in the spring. To read more about AmeriCorps Planning Grants, visit <https://servewisconsin.wi.gov/Pages/Grants/PlanningGrantRFP.aspx>.

#### 3.6.1 Ranking of Applications for Formula Consideration

The amount of funds available for state formula grants in 2019 is not yet determined. In addition to limits in the amount of funds available to the Serve Wisconsin, CNCS may place restrictions on the number of MSYs that can be filled through state AmeriCorps awards. In 2018, Serve Wisconsin was allocated \$2.5 million and no limit of MSYs.

Please review the criteria in Appendices B and C which include documents that outline how applications will be ranked for Formula consideration. The Board's Program Evaluation & Development Committee and/or staff will prepare a ranking of Formula programs and recommendations for awarding funds, member



positions, and MSYs. These recommendations are reviewed by the Program Evaluation & Development Committee of the Board and/or forwarded to the full Board for consideration. The Board reserves the right to request that programs modify their applications in order to create a manageable Formula portfolio. This may include setting a maximum number of programs funded and/or a minimum or maximum number of MSYs per program.

For Competitive applications, applicants are encouraged to apply for the maximum amount of funding and MSYs that they require to administer their programs; however, when applications are considered for formula funding, they may initially be considered at a maximum funding level of \$303,840 (maximum cost per MSY x 20 MSYs).

### **3.6.2 Option to Recommend a Formula Application be Considered as a Planning Grant**

After reviewing an eligible proposal submitted under this RFP, Serve Wisconsin staff may recommend to the Board that an application, regardless of peer review and the performance scoring evaluation, be considered as a Planning Grant application if staff determines that the organization needs more time to prepare to operate a successful AmeriCorps program.

## **3.7 Right to Reject Proposals and Negotiate Contract Terms**

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The Board reserves the right to reject any or all proposals. The Board may negotiate the award amount, authorized budget items, type and number of AmeriCorps MSYs or member positions, and specific programmatic goals with the selected applicants prior to entering into an agreement with an applicant.

## **3.8 Public Inspection of Proposals**

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After notification of awards is made by CNCS and/or the Board, and under the supervision of Board staff, copies of proposals will be available for public inspection from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 PM at 1 W. Wilson St., Room B274, Madison, WI. Applicants should schedule reviews by emailing [servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov](mailto:servewisconsin@wisconsin.gov).

No entire proposal submitted to the state may be marked as confidential, and any materials so marked, by being included in the application, will be considered public information. Evaluation tabulation and scoring by individual peer reviewers will also be open for public inspection, but these scores will not identify individual peer reviewers.

## **3.9 Appeals Process**

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Applicants can only protest or appeal violation of procedures to the Board that are outlined in this *RFP* or fall within the Formula grant selection process. Ranking and scoring by the peer reviewers is not subject to protest or appeal. Notice of intent to protest and any protests must be made in writing. Individuals should make their protests as specific as possible and should fully identify the procedural issue being contested.

Any written notice of intent to protest must be filed with the Board and received in no later than five (5) working days after the notices of intent to award are issued. Any written protest must be received within ten (10) working days after the notice of intent to award is issued.

### **Via U.S. Postal Service or Other Carriers:**

The Board Chair  
Wisconsin National & Community Service Board  
1 W. Wilson Street, Room B274  
Madison WI 53703-3445

The appeal will be reviewed by the Program Evaluation & Development Committee of the Board and a recommendation will be forwarded to the Board for consideration.

The decision of the Board may be appealed to the Secretary of the Department of Administration within five (5) working days of issuance. A copy of such appeal must also be filed with Board. The appeal must allege a violation of a Wisconsin statute or a section of the Wisconsin Administrative Code.

## 4.0 GENERAL PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

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All proposal requirements are outlined in this *RFP*, the *Application Instructions and Attachments*, and Additional Checklists.

## 5.0 TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

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Technical requirements differ based on the type of application being submitted and are included in the *Application Instructions and Attachments*. Pay careful attention to the technical requirements for the appropriate application. For your convenience, an additional documents checklist is available.

## 6.0 PROGRAM BUDGETS

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Program budgets are submitted as part of your proposal. Please follow the budget instructions in the *Application Instructions and Attachments*. Grants under this program are subject to the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements as specified in section 3.5.2.C of this *RFP*.

## 7.0 SPECIAL CONTRACT TERMS AND CONDITIONS

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### 7.1 Payment Requirements

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An operating grant recipient must submit payment requests on at least a quarterly basis. The method of requesting payments will be further detailed in the contract.

### 7.2 Reporting

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Recipients are required to submit a variety of reports which are due at specific times during the life cycle of an award. All reports must be accurate, complete, and submitted on time.

Grantees will be required to submit reports that will be used in Serve Wisconsin's required reports to CNCS. Grantees are required to provide quarterly performance reports and an internal or external evaluation report as required by the AmeriCorps regulations §§2522.500-2522.540 and §§2522.700-2522.740. In addition, grantees – other than fixed amount grantees – will be required to submit quarterly financial reports, and all grantees will be required to submit a project closeout report.

Once the grant is awarded, grantees will be expected to have data collection and data management policies and practices that provide reasonable assurance that they are providing CNCS with high quality programmatic and financial data. At a minimum, grantees should have policies and practices which address the following five aspects of data quality:

- The grantee measures what it intends to measure;
- The grantee collects data in a consistent manner;
- The grantee takes steps to correct data errors;
- The grantee ensures that the data reported is complete; and
- The grantee actively reviews data prior to submission.

#### **Progress Report Data**

In addition to reporting of progress toward the grant's approved performance measure outputs and outcomes, additional demographic and narrative data must be reported annually (as applicable), including the number of applicants for AmeriCorps positions and the number of volunteers recruited and/or supported by AmeriCorps members. The full list of required and optional demographic indicators for AmeriCorps programs can be found on the AmeriCorps Grantee Progress Report webpage.

Failure to submit accurate, complete, and timely required reports may affect the recipient's ability to secure future CNCS funding.

### 7.3 Prime Contractor and Subcontracts or Placement Sites

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The prime contractor will be responsible for contract performance when subcontractors or placement sites are used. However, when subcontractors or placement sites are used, they must abide by all terms and conditions of the contract.

## 7.4 Executed Contract to Constitute Entire Agreement

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In the event of contract award, the contents of this *RFP* (including all attachments), *RFP* addenda and revisions, the proposal of the successful applicant, and additional terms agreed to in writing by the Board and the grant recipient shall become part of the contract. Failure of the successful applicant to accept these as a contractual agreement may result in a cancellation of award.

The following priority for contract documents will be used if there are conflicts or disputes:

- AmeriCorps Contract between the Board and Grantee
- Code of Federal Regulations
- AmeriCorps Grant Terms and Conditions
- Applicant's Proposal and Any Subsequent Amendments
- State Request for Proposals

## 7.5 Termination of Contract

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The Board may terminate the contract at any time at its sole discretion by delivering 30 days written notice to the grant recipient. Upon termination, the Board's liability will be limited to the pro rata cost of the services performed as of the date of termination plus expenses incurred with the prior written approval of the Board. In the event that the grant recipient terminates the contract, for any reason whatsoever, it will refund to the Board within 10 days of said termination, all payments made hereunder by the Board to the grant recipient for work not completed or not accepted by the Board. Such termination will require written notice to that effect to be delivered by the grant recipient to the Board not less than 90 days prior to said termination.

## 8.0 GLOSSARY

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**AmeriCorps:** The national service program funded under 42 U.S.C. §12571-12595 (Division C Programs).

**AmeriCorps Regulations:** Refers to the Code of Federal Regulations that includes the federal requirements related to administering an AmeriCorps\*State program. You can find the CFR. for AmeriCorps programs under Title 45 – Public Welfare, Volume 4, Chapter XXV, parts 2500 – 2599 at [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov).

**AmeriCorps\*State:** The AmeriCorps funds that are allocated to states through a population-based formula or are awarded to states through a national competition.

**AmeriCorps National Service Network:** Includes AmeriCorps State, AmeriCorps National, AmeriCorps Tribes and Territories, AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America), and AmeriCorps NCCC (National Civilian Community Corps) programs taken together as programs dedicated to national service.

**AmeriCorps Member:** Any individual who is serving in an approved national service position and is eligible to receive the education award from the National Service Trust. The term "AmeriCorps Member" is synonymous with the term "participant" as used by the CFR and the AmeriCorps Health Care policy.

**Applicant:** A firm/organization submitting a proposal in response to this *RFP*.

**Board:** The Wisconsin National and Community Service Board.

**Capacity Building:** A set of activities that expand the scale, reach, efficiency, or effectiveness of programs and organizations. These activities achieve lasting positive outcomes for the beneficiary populations served by CNCS-supported organizations (i.e., AmeriCorps programs). As a general rule, CNCS considers capacity building activities to be *indirect services* that enable CNCS-supported organizations to provide more, better, and sustained *direct services*. Capacity building activities cannot be solely intended to support the administration or operations of the organization. Capacity building activities must:

1. Be intended to support or enhance the program delivery model;
2. Respond to the program's goal of increasing, expanding, or enhancing services in order to address the most pressing needs identified in the community; and

3. Enable the program to provide a sustained level of more or better direct services after the capacity building services end.

**CFR.:** Code of Federal Regulations.

**Community-based Agency:** A private nonprofit organization (including a church or other religious entity) that: (1) is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community; and (2) is engaged in meeting educational, environmental, public safety, homeland security, or other human needs.

**Consortia:** A group of organizations eligible for Corporation assistance under this application, or a nonprofit organization created or identified by such a group, whose purpose is to facilitate and support the work of member organizations in ways that add material and human resources (e.g., subgrants and technical assistance) beyond those available to each member individually.

**Continuation Applicants:** Those currently in their first or second year of a competitive funding cycle.

**Cost Reimbursement Grants:** These grants fund a portion of program operating costs and member living allowances with flexibility to use all of the funds for allowable costs regardless of whether or not the program recruits and retains all AmeriCorps members. Cost reimbursement grants include a formal matching requirement and require the submission of a budget and financial reports.

**CNCS or the Corporation:** The Corporation for National and Community Service.

**DUNS#:** The DUNS number is an identifier that helps the federal government improve statistical reports on federal grants and cooperative agreements. The DUNS number does not replace your Employer Identification Number. DUNS numbers may be obtained at no cost by calling the DUNS number request line at (866) 705-5711 or by applying online: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. The website indicates a 48-hour email turnaround on requests for DUNS numbers; however, CNCS suggests registering at least 30 days in advance of the application due date.

**Education Award Program Grants (EAP) fixed amount grant:** Programs apply for a small fixed dollar amount per MSY, can enroll less than full-time members, and use their own resources to cover most of the costs to run the program. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-time fixed amount grants, there are no specific match or financial reporting requirements.

**eGrants:** CNCS's integrated, secure, Web-based system for applications: <https://egrants.cns.gov>

**Eligible Member:** An individual: (1) who is enrolled in an approved national service position; (2) who is a U.S. citizen, U.S. national or lawful permanent resident alien of the United States; (3) who is at least 17 years of age at the commencement of service unless the member is out of school and enrolled (a) in a full-time, year-round youth corps Program or full-time summer Program as defined in the Act [42 U.S.C. §12572 (a) (2)], in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 25, inclusive, or (b) in a Program for economically disadvantaged youth as defined in the Act [42 U.S.C. §12572 (a)(9)], in which case he or she must be between the ages of 16 and 24, inclusive; (4) has a high school diploma or an equivalency certificate [or agrees to obtain a high school diploma or its equivalent before using an education award] and who has not dropped out of elementary or secondary school in order to enroll as an AmeriCorps member [unless enrolled in an institution of higher education on an ability to benefit basis and is considered eligible for funds under section 484 of the Higher Education Act of 1965, 20 U.S.C. §1091], or who has been determined through an independent assessment conducted by the Program to be incapable of obtaining a high school diploma or its equivalent [provided that CNCS has waived the education attainment requirement for the individual]; (5) has passed required criminal history background checks.

**Education Priority Interventions:** Note that these must be evidence-based interventions that are assessed by the reviewers as having Moderate or Strong evidence. All components and outcomes must be present.

Programs	Core Components	Outcomes
School readiness		

Intervention #1	• Instructional home visits	• Enhanced emergent literacy skills
	• Parent/child literacy activities	• Increased parenting skills
	• Parent monthly group meetings and instruction	
Intervention #2	• Whole-class and small-group language and literacy activities	• Enhanced emergent literacy skills
	• Individual language and literacy activities	
	• Family involvement/communication	
	• Volunteer engagement in projects	
Intervention #3	• Whole-class literacy enrichment activities	• Enhanced emergent literacy skills,
	• One-on-one or small group literacy tutoring	• Kindergarten readiness
K-12 success		
Intervention #4	• Tutoring or supplemental instruction	• Increased math achievement
Intervention #5	• Apprenticeships	• Increased reading achievement
	• High school application support	• Increased math achievement
	• College preparation	• Increased high school completion
	• Leadership skills instruction	• Increased attendance
	• Alumni program	
Intervention #6	• Literacy tutoring	• Increased reading achievement
		• Improved social-emotional skills
Intervention #7	• Literacy instruction	• Increased reading achievement
	• Professional support for teachers	
	• Parenting events	
Intervention #8	• Organized recess activities	• Improved Socio-emotional skills
	• Class game time	• Improved BMI/fitness level
	• Youth leadership program	
	• After-school activities	
Intervention #9	• One-on-one tutoring	• Improved reading achievement
	• Dedicated school space and use of materials	• Improved socio-emotional skills
	• Structured and individualized curriculum	

	• Student assessments for data-driven instruction	
	• Rigorous and ongoing training	
	• Instructional supervision	
Intervention #10	• Individualized curriculum as needed	• Increased math achievement
	• Student life program	• Increased reading achievement
	• College counseling	• Increased high school completion
	• Student support services	• Improved socio-emotional skills
Intervention #11	• Individual literacy tutoring	• Improved reading achievement
	• Family engagement/communication	
Intervention #12	• Pre-service training	• Increased math achievement for novice teachers
	• Training and professional development while teaching	
Post-secondary education support		
Intervention #13	• SAT and ACT preparation	• Improved ACT scores
	• College admissions consulting/ support	• Increased access to college
	• Financial aid consulting/ support	

**Enrollment Rate:** Enrollment rate is calculated as slots filled, plus refill slots filled, divided by slots awarded.

**Evidence-based program:** is a program that has been rigorously evaluated and has demonstrated positive results for at least one key desired outcome. Rigorous evaluation means conducting at least one Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) or Quasi-Experimental Design (QED) evaluation of the same intervention described in the application.

**Evidence-informed program:** uses the best available knowledge, research, and evaluation to guide program design and implementation, but does not have scientific research or rigorous evaluation of the intervention described in the application.

Applicants may be evidence-informed if they have incorporated research from other evidence-based programs into their program designs and/or have collected performance measurement data on the intervention described in the application.

### **Evidence Tiers**

**Pre-preliminary evidence** means the applicant has not submitted an outcome or impact evaluation of the same intervention described in the application, although the applicant may have collected some performance data on the intervention (e.g., data on intervention outputs and/or outcomes). Applicants in this tier must describe in the Evidence Base section of the application how their program design is evidence-informed (see definition above). Applicants may also cite prior performance measure data if applicable.

**Preliminary evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two outcome evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and yielded positive results on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. The outcome evaluations may either have been conducted internally by the applicant organization or by an entity external to the applicant. The study design must include pre and post-assessments without a comparison group or a post-assessment

comparison between intervention and comparison groups. In some cases a retrospective pre-post assessment may be considered, but its use must be justified in the text of the evaluation report.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Preliminary evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

**Moderate evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two well-designed and well-implemented evaluation reports that evaluated the same intervention described in the application and identified evidence of effectiveness on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Evidence of effectiveness (or positive findings) is determined using experimental design evaluations (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT)) or Quasi-Experimental Design evaluations (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. The ability to generalize the findings from the RCT or QED beyond the study context may be limited (e.g., single-site.) The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Moderate evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

**Strong evidence** means the applicant has submitted up to two evaluation reports demonstrating that the same intervention described in the application has been tested nationally, regionally, or at the state-level (e.g., multi-site) using a well-designed and well-implemented experimental design evaluation (i.e., Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT)) or a Quasi-Experimental Design evaluation (QED) with statistically matched comparison (i.e., counterfactual) and treatment groups. Alternatively, the proposed intervention's evidence may be based on multiple (up to two) well-designed and well-implemented QEDs or RCTs of the same intervention described in the application in different locations or with different populations within a local geographic area. The overall pattern of evaluation findings must be consistently positive on one or more key desired outcomes of interest as depicted in the applicant's logic model. Findings from the RCT or QED evaluations may be generalized beyond the study context. The evaluations were conducted by an independent entity external to the organization implementing the intervention.

CNCS grantees recompeting for their third competitive grant cycle are required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program. The CNCS-required evaluation report may count towards one of the two reports allowed for the Strong evidence tier or may be submitted in addition to this. In the latter case, all three evaluation reports will be considered against the review criteria.

If the applicant is not required to submit an evaluation report of their CNCS funded program, then more than two reports will not be considered.

**Impact evaluation** An evaluation that provides statistical evidence of how well a program achieves its desired outcomes and what effect it has on service recipients and/or service participants compared to what would have happened in the absence of the program. Impact evaluations must be designed to provide evidence of a causal relationship between program activities and outcomes (45 C.F.R. § 2522.700). Grantees must use an experimental or quasi-experimental evaluation design (i.e., the evaluation must include a control group or a statistically matched comparison group).

**Same intervention described in the application** The intervention evaluated in submitted evaluation reports must match the intervention proposed in the application in the following areas, all of which must be clearly described in the Program Design and Logic Model sections of the application:

- Characteristics of the beneficiary population
- Characteristics of the population delivering the intervention

- Dosage (frequency, duration) and design of the intervention
- The setting in which the intervention is delivered
- Outcomes of the intervention

Submitted reports that do not sufficiently match the intervention proposed by the applicant in all of these areas will not be considered applicable and will not be reviewed or receive any points.

**Fixed Amount Grants:** These grants provide a fixed amount of funding per Member Service Year (MSY) that is substantially lower than the amount required to operate the program. Organizations use their own or other resources to cover the remaining costs. Programs are not required to submit budgets or financial reports, there is no specific match requirement, and programs are not required to track and maintain documentation of match. However, CNCS provides only a portion of the cost of running the program and organizations must raise the additional resources needed to run the program. Programs can access all of the funds, provided they recruit and retain the members supported under the grant based on the MSY level awarded. Professional Corps programs applying for operational funding through a Fixed Amount Grant must submit a budget in support of their request for operational funds. New applicants are not eligible to apply for Full Time Fixed amount grants except Education Award Programs (EAP) and Professional Corps Programs. Second- and third-year continuation applicants with cost reimbursement grants must submit a new application if they are interested in applying for a fixed-amount grant.

- **Full-Time Fixed amount grants:** Fixed amount grants are available for programs that enroll full-time members or less than full-time members serving in a full-time capacity only. Professional Corps may only have full-time members. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant.
- **Education Award Grants (EAP) Fixed amount grant:** Programs apply for a small fixed amount per MSY, can enroll less than full-time members, and use their own resources to cover all other costs. Programs can access funds under the grant based on enrolling the full complement of members supported under the grant. As with full-time fixed amount grants, there are no specific match or financial reporting requirements for the EAP fixed amount grants.

State Commissions can withhold up to 2% administrative funds from fixed price grants.

**Grant Recipient:** An organization that is awarded AmeriCorps funds for direct benefit of the community.

**Host Service Site:** An organization, or other entity, that has been selected to provide a service placement for, or host, a member. Also referred to as a Member Service Location.

**Indian Tribes:** A federally-recognized Indian tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. §1602), that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include any tribal organization controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.

**Member Service Location:** A member service location is the site at which an AmeriCorps member is placed to provide his/her service to the community. Also referred to as a Host Service Site.

**Member Service Year (MSY):** This term refers to the equivalent of one full-time AmeriCorps member position (at least 1700 service hours). One full-time slot equals 1.0 MSY. One reduced full-time slot equals .700 MSY; one half-time slot equals 0.500 MSY; one reduced half-time slot equals 0.381 MSY; one quarter-time slot equals 0.2646 MSY; and one minimum-time slot equals 0.2116 MSY.

**Multi-Site Program:** An AmeriCorps program that places one or more members at multiple host service sites within a single community, county, or statewide.

**National Direct Applicants:**

1. Multi-state: Organizations that propose to operate AmeriCorps programs in more than one state or territory apply directly to CNCS.



2. **Federally-recognized Indian Tribes:** Applicants that are Indian Tribes apply directly to CNCS. An Indian Tribe is defined as a federally recognized Indian Tribe, band, nation, or other organized group or community, including any Native village, Regional Corporation, or Village Corporation, as defined under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. § 1602), that the United States Government determines is eligible for special programs and services provided under federal law to Indians because of their status as Indians. Indian Tribes also include tribal organizations controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by one of the entities described above.
3. **State and Territories without Commissions:** Applicants in South Dakota, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands apply directly to CNCS because these Territories have not established a State Commission.

**New Applicant:** Those who have never had AmeriCorps State and/or National funding before. Current and former formula Grantees are not new.

**NOFO or Notice:** Notice of Funding Opportunity

**Opportunity Youth:** Opportunity youth are economically disadvantaged individuals ages 16-24 who are disconnected from school or work.

**Other Revenue:** Funds necessary to operate an AmeriCorps program that are not CNCS funds or grantee share (match) identified in the budget. Programs should not enter the total operating budget for their organization unless the entire operating budget supports the AmeriCorps program. Programs that have additional revenue sources not included in the matching funds section of the budget should provide the amount of this additional revenue that supports the program. This amount should not include the CNCS or grantee share amounts in the budget. Fixed amount grantees should enter all non-CNCS funds that support the program in this field. All fixed grants will have other revenue.

**Partnership:** A joint arrangement among a group of organizations eligible for Corporation assistance under this application, or a nonprofit organization created or identified by such a group, whose purpose is to carry out common objectives that are specific and well-defined, and in which the responsibilities of each partner are clearly defined and mutually understood.

**Performance Measure:** Performance measures are measurable indicators of a program's performance as it relates to member service activities. Performance measurement is the process of regularly measuring the services provided by your program and the effect your program has in communities or in the lives of members or community beneficiaries. The main purpose of performance measurement is to strengthen AmeriCorps programs and foster continuous improvement and to identify best practices and models that merit replication.

**Professional Corps:** Professional Corps programs are composed of AmeriCorps members serving as professionals; i.e. teachers, health care providers, police officers, engineers, attorneys, or other professionals. The programs recruit and place qualified members in communities with an inadequate number of such professionals. Professional Corps members' salaries/compensation, including childcare are paid entirely by the organizations with which the members serve, and are not included in the budget. In order to be considered for funding, applicants must demonstrate that there are an inadequate number of professionals in the community(ies) where the program seeks to place members. These grants are fixed price grants.

Applicants may propose any authorized program type. In the case that a proposed program fits more than one program type (e.g., a program could be either a professional corps or a traditional program). CNCS staff will make a determination as to program type that will be considered for funding. The determination will be based on data provided within the application and supplemental materials submitted with the application. The determination may be different from the program type proposed by the applicant.

**Program:** A national service program, described in the Act (42 U.S.C. §12572(a)), carried out by the Grantee through funds awarded by CNCS, and carried out in accordance with federal requirements.

**Program Sponsor:** An entity responsible for recruiting, selecting, and training members, providing them benefits and support services, engaging them in regular group activities, and placing them in projects. The program sponsor is in most cases the fiscal agent.

**Prohibited Activities:** While charging time to the AmeriCorps program, accumulating service or training hours, or otherwise performing activities supported by the AmeriCorps program or CNCS, staff and members may not engage in the following activities (see 45 CFR § 2520.65):

1. Attempting to influence legislation;
2. Organizing or engaging in protests, petitions, boycotts, or strikes;
3. Assisting, promoting, or deterring union organizing;
4. Impairing existing contracts for services or collective bargaining agreements;
5. Engaging in partisan political activities, or other activities designed to influence the outcome of an election to any public office;
6. Participating in, or endorsing, events or activities that are likely to include advocacy for or against political parties, political platforms, political candidates, proposed legislation, or elected officials;
7. Engaging in religious instruction, conducting worship services, providing instruction as part of a program that includes mandatory religious instruction or worship, constructing or operating facilities devoted to religious instruction or worship, maintaining facilities primarily or inherently devoted to religious instruction or worship, or engaging in any form of religious proselytization;
8. Providing a direct benefit to—
  - a. A business organized for profit;
  - b. A labor union;
  - c. A partisan political organization;
  - d. A nonprofit organization that fails to comply with the restrictions contained in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 related to engaging in political activities or substantial amount of lobbying except that nothing in these provisions shall be construed to prevent participants from engaging in advocacy activities undertaken at their own initiative; and
  - e. An organization engaged in the religious activities described in paragraph C. 7. above, unless CNCS assistance is not used to support those religious activities;
9. Conducting a voter registration drive or using CNCS funds to conduct a voter registration drive;
10. Providing abortion services or referrals for receipt of such services; and
11. Such other activities as CNCS may prohibit.

AmeriCorps members may not engage in the above activities directly or indirectly by recruiting, training, or managing others for the primary purpose of engaging in one of the activities listed above. Individuals may exercise their rights as private citizens and may participate in the activities listed above on their own initiative, on non-AmeriCorps time, and using non-CNCS funds.

**Project:** An activity, or a set of activities carried out by a program that results in a specific, identifiable community service or improvement that: (1) otherwise would not have been made with existing funds; and (2) does not duplicate the routine services or functions of the organization to which members are assigned.

**Project Sponsor:** The same as a host service site or an organization or other entity that has been selected to provide a placement for a member.

**Proposal:** A response to this *RFP*.

**Recompete Applicants:** Those that have received AmeriCorps State and/or National funding before and are in Year 3 of their grant cycle and are applying for continued funding for the program for a new cycle.

**Reducing and/or Preventing Prescription Drug and Opioid Abuse:** CNCS is interested in program models that seek to address the prescription drug and opioid abuse crisis in America.

**Retention Rate:** Retention rate is calculated as the number of members exited with an education award (full or partial award) divided by the number of members enrolled.

**RFP:** Request for Proposals.

**Rural Communities:** CNCS uses rural-urban commuting area (RUCA) codes to classify program addresses as either rural or urban for analytic purposes. RUCA codes classify U.S. census tracts using measures of population density, urbanization, and daily commuting. Census tracts with an urban cluster population less than 50,000 are considered rural (RUCA codes 4 – 10). Applicants are encouraged to designate themselves as serving rural communities if some or all service locations are in rural areas as defined by RUCA codes or if the program can provide other compelling evidence that the program is rural in the narrative portion of the application. This self-designation will be considered in grant-making decisions. For more information about RUCA codes, please visit the USDA website found here: <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/rural-urban-commuting-area-codes.aspx>.

The Office of Grants Management uses Beale Codes when assessing alternative match requirements as the statute (45 CFR § 2521.60(c)) requires it.

**Rural Intermediaries:** CNCS recognizes that severely under-resourced communities may have limited capacity to successfully apply for and implement an AmeriCorps program, due to the size and organizational capacity of eligible applicant/host site organizations or the lack of available matching funds in these communities. Thus it may be effective for a single eligible applicant (intermediary) to develop an application and oversee the implementation of an AmeriCorps program that engages multiple grassroots non-profits/eligible applicants (referred to as a consortium) that, individually, do not have the necessary organizational or fundraising capacity to apply for and run an AmeriCorps program. Given the desire to address community needs holistically, the nonprofits/eligible applicants that make up the consortium may have, but are not required to have, different focus areas (including the non-focus area capacity building) and thus the nonprofit/eligible applicant intermediary will be multi-focused.

Applicants seeking consideration under this priority must demonstrate that they will be serving in rural severely under-resourced communities; that their application represents a consortium, that the activities provided by the consortium collectively address a compelling community need or set of needs; and that they have sufficient financial and management capacity to act as an umbrella organization for the consortium. Applicants should refer to section 2.3.1 for information related to page limits specific to rural intermediaries.

The eligible applicant (intermediary) should submit one application which describes:

- How the partnership/consortium will be organized and AmeriCorps resources will be allocated between the partnering entities (intermediary and consortium members).
- The proposed theory (ies) of change and program model(s).
- How the intermediary will utilize an identified consortium of nonprofits/eligible applicants who are well positioned to achieve outcomes identified in the theory of change.

Applicants must submit by the application deadline letters of support from all members of the consortium. See section 2.1.4 for specific submission information and requirements.

**Safer Communities:** are activities that focus on public safety, and/or partnerships between police and community. CNCS is looking for program models that create, support, and initiate activities that provide opportunities for law enforcement and community members to become constructively engaged in building or rebuilding public spaces and opportunities for constructive dialogue via sports and community team building such as block watch organizations.

**SAM (System for Award Management):** SAM is combining federal procurement system and catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance into one new system. SAM collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of Federal agency contracts, grant awards, cooperative agreements, and other forms of federal assistance. All grant recipients are required to maintain valid registration, which must be renewed annually. Applicants not already registered with SAM are urged to begin the registration process immediately in order to avoid any delays in submitting applications. Applicants must have a DUNS number in order to register with SAM. To register online go to [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov).

**Same Project:** Two projects will be considered the same if they: address the same issue areas, address the same priorities, address the same objectives, serve the same target communities and population, and utilize the same sites. Programs must get approval from the Board and CNCS to be considered a new project.

If an applicant is applying for a different program model (a new project), select New. Current and previous grantees need to get approval from the Board and CNCS to be considered a new project. CNCS will consider a project to be new if there is a meaningful difference between it and previous projects in comparison of the following characteristics, among others: the objectives and priorities of the projects; the nature of the services provided; the program staff, participants, and volunteers involved; the geographic locations in which the services are provided; the populations served; and the proposed community partnerships. (§ 2522.340)

Requests for approval to be considered for a new project should include information about how the new project differs from the previous project in the characteristics noted above. The request should also include the proposed name of the new project. Board and CNCS staff will review the request to determine if the proposed project does represent a meaningful difference from the previous project or if the proposed project is an example of natural program evolution over time. If it is determined that the project is new, CNCS staff will create a new project in CNCS's web-based management system.

**Service-learning:** A method under which students or members learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service that: (1) is conducted in and meets the needs of a community and is coordinated with an elementary school, secondary school, institution of higher education, or community service program, and with the community; (2) is member/student-planned and member/student-run; (3) is integrated into and enhances the academic curriculum of the students or the educational components of the community service program in which the members are enrolled; and (4) includes structured time for the students and members to reflect on the service experience.

**Serve Wisconsin:** The marketing name for the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board.

**Single-State Applicants:** Organizations that propose to operate in only one state must apply through the Governor-appointed State or Territory Commissions (Wisconsin National and Community Service Board). Each state and territory commission administers its own selection process and submits to CNCS the applicants it selects to compete for funding. Single-State applicants must contact their State Commissions to learn about their state or territory processes and deadlines which may be significantly earlier than the CNCS deadlines and may have additional requirements. The list of State and Territory Commissions can be found on CNCS's website. A single state application submitted directly to CNCS by the applicant rather than the State Commission will be considered noncompliant and will not be reviewed.

**Slot:** Also called member positions or positions. One position in a national service program. Slots can be full-time (1700 hours), half-time (900 hours), reduced half-time (675 hours), quarter-time (450 hours), and minimum time (300 hours).

**State:** The State of Wisconsin.

**State Commission:** A State Commission on National and Community Service established by a state pursuant to the Act (42 U.S.C. §12638), including an authorized alternative administrative entity to administer the state's national service plan and national service programs and to perform such other duties prescribed by law. Wisconsin's State Commission is the Wisconsin National and Community Service Board.

**Unallowable Activities:** In addition to the *Prohibited Activities*, the following restrictions also apply to the service of AmeriCorps members:

Nonduplication: Corporation assistance may not be used to duplicate an activity that is already available in the locality of a program. Corporation assistance will not be provided to a private nonprofit entity to conduct activities that are the same or substantially equivalent to activities provided by a State or local government agency in which such entity resides, unless the entity complies with the following "nondisplacement" requirements.

Nondisplacement:

- 1) An employer may not displace an employee or position, including partial displacement such as reduction in hours, wages, or employment benefits, as a result of the use by such employer of a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- 2) An organization may not displace a volunteer by using a participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance.
- 3) A service opportunity will not be created under this chapter that will infringe in any manner on the promotional opportunity of an employed individual.
- 4) A participant in a program receiving Corporation assistance may not perform any services or duties or engage in activities that would otherwise be performed by an employee as part of the assigned duties of such employee.
- 5) A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform any services or duties, or engage in activities, that---
  - i) Will supplant the hiring of employed workers; or
  - ii) Are services, duties, or activities with respect to which an individual has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures.
- 6) A participant in any program receiving assistance may not perform services or duties that have been performed by or were assigned to any---
  - i) Presently employed worker;
  - ii) Employee who recently resigned or was discharged;
  - iii) Employee who is subject to a reduction in force or who has recall rights pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement or applicable personnel procedures;
  - iv) Employee who is on leave (terminal, temporary, vacation, emergency, or sick); or
  - v) Employee who is on strike or who is being locked out.

**WNC SB:** Wisconsin National and Community Service Board, a 21-member citizen body appointed by the Governor and staffed by state employees.

**Youth Corps Program:** Pursuant to Sec. 16.22(1)(dm), Wis. Stats., the term “youth corps program” means a full-time, year-round national service program or a full-time, summer national service program that does all of the following: (1) undertakes meaningful service projects with visible public benefit, including natural resources, urban renovation and human resource projects; (2) Includes as participants persons who have attained the age of 16 but who have not attained the age of 26, including youths who are not enrolled in school and other disadvantaged youths; and (3) Provides those participants with crew-based, highly structured and adult-supervised work experience, life skills training, education, career guidance and counseling, employment training and support services and with the opportunity to develop citizenship values and skills through service to their community and country.